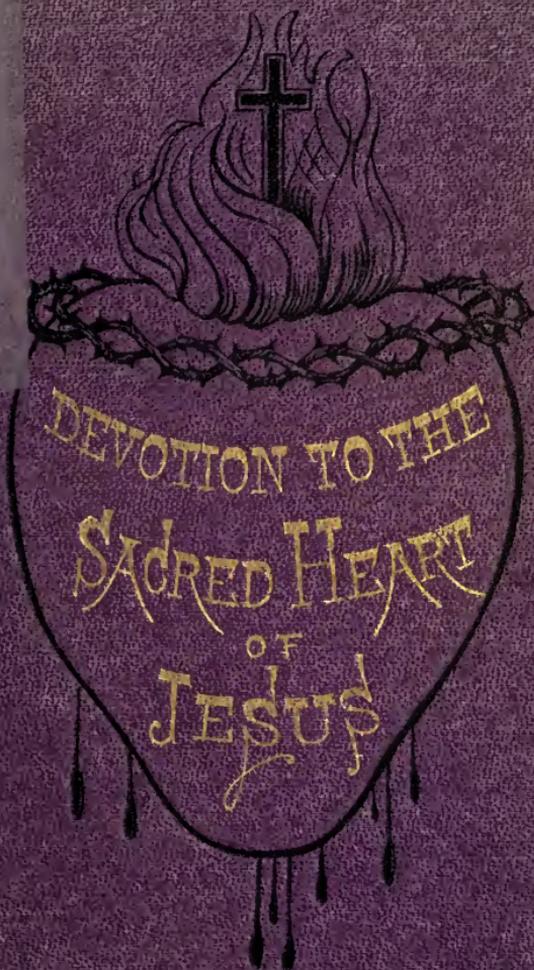


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DEVOTION TO THE  
SACRED HEART  
OF  
JESUS

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LECTURES.



LECTURES  
UPON  
THE DEVOTION  
TO THE  
MOST SACRED HEART  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST.

*Delivered in S. Ann's Church, New York, on the Sunday  
Evenings of Advent, 1873.*

BY THE  
VERY REV. THOMAS S. PRESTON, V.G.,  
Pastor of S. Ann's Church.

SECOND EDITION.

NEW YORK :  
ROBERT CODDINGTON, PUBLISHER,  
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## PREFACE.

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OWE it to myself as well as the public to state that these lectures were wholly *extemporaneous*, and that they are printed as they were reported by a stenographer. I was induced to have them reported and published by the kind advice of friends, who made me hope that thus they might accomplish greater good by reaching a wider circle, and by speaking where my voice could not go, or even after it is stilled in death.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is becoming now so important, and awakens such enthusiasm in the Church, that even a small contribution towards it may be gladly received. The Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of New York have solemnly consecrated their dioceses to the Sacred Heart, and their voices only echo the language of the Supreme Pontiff. Our Blessed Redeemer is surely

calling His flock to draw around His Sacred Side, that they may know the treasures of His love, and give themselves more completely to His service. I make, then, my humble offering, devoutly praying the great Master of souls to accept it, and make it instrumental in winning some souls to Him, and in promoting, even in a slight degree, the glory of His most loving Heart.

T. S. P.

NEW YORK, FEAST OF S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, 1873.

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# LECTURE FIRST.

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## *THE NATURE AND ENDS OF THE DEVOTION TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS.*

“Come unto me all ye who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls.”—S. MATTHEW xi. 28, 29.



THE circumstances, my dear brethren, under which our Blessed Lord spoke these words are full of meaning, and throw light upon the intentions with which He spoke them. He had been contemplating His rejection by His own nation, and had been complaining to His disciples that the mighty works which He had wrought had not even produced conviction; that though He had been through the streets and lanes of

Galilee, though He had come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet, after all His kindness and mercy, He was to be rejected by them. Then in the most tender language He seems to gather around Him His elect, and, lifting His eyes to heaven, He says, "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto little ones. Even so, Father, for so hath it seemed good in Thy sight. And yet I am the only rest of this burdened and ruined world; yet have I come on earth with a love far passing all human comprehension, to seek them in their ways of sorrow and misery, and to bring them back to the paths of life and salvation. Come; therefore, unto me, all ye who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you; and if you will follow me, you must take up my yoke and learn of me. I will expose to

you the secrets of my heart; I will open to you the mysteries of my infinite love; I will draw you to myself with the cords of Adam. I have become man for that very purpose, that I might win man and make him my own. Therefore, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls."

And in this day of ours we may seem to hear the same language from the lips of our Blessed Lord; in an age which rejects Him and casts Him out; when Christianity itself seems to come, as it were, to its last battle; where all around us are the signs of the coming of the Son of Man; when infidelity grows apace; when the light of the glorious Gospel waxes dim, and men have learned even to deny the Lord that bought them. In this day of ours doth the Lord in His tabernacles seem to gather around Him, with new tenderness, the little ones of His flock, the

chosen souls who have learned to love Him. To them doth He make known the secrets of His grace. "No man knoweth me but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father but he to whom I will reveal him. Come, therefore, to me, ye that are true, ye that seek for life and salvation, ye that in an age of death would live; come to me, and in my heart find rest for your souls—rest on earth in the joys of my life, in the power of my eucharistic grace, which shall be wholly yours. Come and live in me, and I will live in you, and then shall you find rest in that latter day, when the Sacred Heart, on its throne of glory, shall draw to itself all who have loved it and who have served it in the days of their pilgrimage."

I hardly need say to you, my dear brethren, that the devotion to the most Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord hath assumed a new importance in the present

age. We behold on every side the evidence of an awakening in the Church of God; and piety and zeal are all directed to the tabernacles of the Most Holy, to Jesus on his eucharistic throne, to the Sacred Heart of the Man-God, filled with love and tenderness for our race and for all its miseries. From the Supreme Pontiff, in his prison, looking to his crucified Master, and begging mercy for the Church committed to his care; from prelates exiled or in prison; from the religious driven from their homes for the faith of Christ and the confession of His truth; from holy souls all the world over, who are yearning for God, and the life eternal, cometh now the cry: "Sacred Heart of Jesus, be our refuge in the hour of our distress!" When all human help seemeth to be vain; when there is no arm to save, no power to uphold; when the Church of Christ begins again, as it

were, to repeat the story of her ancient persecutions, "Sacred Heart of the Man-God, be our refuge; by thy tenderness draw our hearts to thee, and by thy power disperse the enemies of thy holy faith." This awakening in the Church of God is a sign of the revival of new piety and a higher life. Where the brightness and lustre of our devotion had become dim, God, by a coal from his own divine altar, has awakened it. Where our hearts have become worldly, seeking earthly things, and bounding their vision by things temporal, the Sacred Heart of the Son of God comes before us to win us from all things that decay and pass away. The ever-fruitful mother of saints awakes at the sound of her Beloved's voice. We have had our Divine Lord with us for nineteen centuries. Since He went on high to His seat of glory, He hath remained on earth on the altars of the

faithful, and from His eucharistic throne hath reigned in the hearts of His elect. He hath been the sacrifice by which all is renewed, and the saving host by which all our life is preserved. And yet we have never realized, as we ought, what it was to have this God of light and mercy in our very hands; to be so near to the infinite fountain of peace and love; to have the treasures of the Sacred Heart within our grasp. So when the columns of the enemy press against the ramparts of the Church of Christ; when even light after light goeth out on the outskirts of our Zion; around the tabernacles of the All-Holy do we kneel, and our faith revives in our Eucharistic God. He who is the life of the Church, He who is God and man, the Word made flesh, though He may repeat the sorrows of His Calvary, surely will triumph, and the glory of the resurrection shall dawn again. Not only

is the awakening of devotion to the most Sacred Heart of our Lord a proof of new life and piety among the faithful, but it is also an evidence that God is coming near His church to make great demands upon her zeal and her loyalty. He cometh in grace, and He cometh with His cross; he cometh with the riches of His heart, but He cometh also with the tender admonition, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and humble of heart." And who knoweth what God may call us yet to do for His sake, in this world of ours? Who knoweth if God may not have a strong and mighty sacrifice which He will demand from us; a sacrifice which shall carry our affections far above things which are temporal, and lead them unto the very kingdom of truth and life eternal? And where the Son of God thus cometh near, opening the windows of

His grace upon His Church, and drawing around Him His elect, there is the evidence of the march of His divine power. It will be well for us if we are willing, in this day of His power, to awake from the deadness of sin, from the coldness of unbelief, and turn ourselves to that true love which God has revealed to us in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This, then, is the purpose for which, on the Sunday evenings of this Advent, I propose to speak to you in regard to the devotion of the most Sacred Heart of our Lord. I ask you to respond to the call of the Church of God, of its Supreme Pontiff, and of its pastors. I ask you to awake to those mighty impulses which the Spirit of Christ Himself is breathing in your hearts, and, as Catholics whom God has called to the knowledge of the truth, arise to the nobility and the dignity of that high vocation. So shall

you be willing in the day of the divine power, and so shall the Redeemer clasp you to His Sacred Breast among His little ones, to whom He may reveal the mysteries of His own life; the secrets of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I propose to speak to you to-night in regard to the *nature* and *ends* of this devotion as briefly as I may, considering the vast importance of the subject. In speaking of the *nature* of this devotion, I must set plainly before you the object which we worship, the motive of our worship, and then add a brief account of the history of this devotion in the Church, and the manner in which our Lord has been pleased to reveal His will concerning it. Thus shall we be better prepared, by the light of the Holy Spirit, to understand the ends for which Almighty God in these latter days hath demanded of his chosen a new and special consecration to the Sacred Heart.

I.

The *object* of our devotion is the physical, fleshly heart of the Son of God, which beat in His bosom, which was the centre of His vital organism, and through which coursed the most precious blood. When we adore the Sacred Heart of our Lord, it is no symbolic worship; it is a real and true adoration of the actual organ of our Redeemer; and the nature of this adoration is the same as that of our adoration of the Eternal Trinity; for there is no distinction between the worship which we pay to the humanity of the Son of God and that which we pay to the Eternal Trinity. The Holy Church has decided that it is even heresy to undertake to distinguish in thought between the adoration that we pay to the humanity of the Son of God and that which we pay to His Divinity; for God the Son

is man, the Word was made flesh, and God the Second Person subsists in two natures since the moment of His incarnation. The humanity of the Son of God has no personality but that of the Eternal Word. The human nature, therefore, of the Son of God is as much His nature as is His divine nature; and hence, being the human nature of God the Word, and being hypostatically united to Him, it is to be adored with the same adoration as that which we pay to God the Word; for "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth." Nor can we in our minds even separate the humanity of the Son of God from His divinity, in which it always subsisted; and that which is true of the whole humanity of the Son of God is true of all its parts. The precious feet that went about

doing good, seeking the lost and the wretched; the hands that were nailed to the cross; the eyes that looked love and tenderness into the sinner's heart; the precious blood that was sprinkled upon the streets of Jerusalem; the body that lay bloodless in the sepulchre—these all subsisted in the person of the Eternal Word, and are, therefore, to be adored by the very highest worship that we pay to God. Any other view of the incarnation of the Son of God would destroy its very nature. The Son of God would not be man, the Word would not be made flesh. Hence, in all days the piety and affection of the faithful have sought out ways to show tenderness and veneration to the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ, to the hands that were pierced, to the feet that were nailed to the cross, to the thorn-crowned head, and, above all, to the broken heart that was opened by the lance of the

centurion, whence flowed out the cleansing stream of water and of blood. And in thus adoring the humanity of the Son of God in any or in all of its parts, we do but adore God the Word incarnate.

The *motive* of our adoration is, no doubt, drawn from the way in which our worship is directed to the most Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord. Our Blessed Saviour himself hath very often represented His heart as the seat of His most tender love and pity to our lost and ruined race. In accordance even with the common sense of mankind and the use of language consecrated by the Scriptures themselves, the seat of the affections is placed in the human heart. In adoring, therefore, the human heart of the Son of God, we have a motive of adoring the infinite love incarnate; the love that animated this Sacred Heart, that dwelt in it and moved it, that guided it to all its

great deeds of mercy, that brought the Son of the Highest from heaven to take our nature, and in that nature to take upon Himself the ignominy of the cross, and, above all, to humble himself in the divine Eucharist. And there is nothing more potent, nothing more moving, than thus to represent by the Sacred Heart of the Son of God that pity of which we can gain but little idea, that love which is an infinite ocean—God Himself, who is love, stretched before our bewildering gaze. No wonder, then, dear brethren, that from the very beginning, the devotion to the sacred humanity of our Lord should have become one of the great devotions of the Church. No wonder that the piety of the faithful in the ages all along has sought out the different parts of that sacred humanity which were bruised and wounded for our transgressions, and poured upon them the

torrent of its devout tenderness. No wonder that the Sacred Heart of the Son of God hath been the transport of saints, the joy of virgins, and the rest of confessors.

We find, in the language of the early fathers, reference to this particular devotion, now becoming so important. We find even in S. Austin and S. Gregory, and in S. Gertrude, revelations, scintillations, as it were, of that greater light which God was to make known to His Church in after-days. S. Gertrude, in one of her revelations, tells us that seeing before her S. John the Evangelist, the Apostle of love, the Apostle of the Sacred Heart—because it was his privilege above all others to rest upon that Sacred Heart, to feel its beating, and to draw from its sweetness—the Apostle told her that it pleased Almighty God to reserve for the latter days, when faith

and piety should grow cold, the particular devotion to the Sacred Heart; and that when that day came, He would make it known by His chosen servant. I have, therefore, briefly to set before you this evening the revelations made by Jesus Christ Himself to that saint through whose agency the devotion to the Sacred Heart, as it now exists, has been propagated in the Church. It is no new devotion; it is rather the revival of an old, but it is a new and more intense devotion to the great humanity of the Son of God. The Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque was that servant of God to whom, now two hundred years ago, her Blessed Master made these declarations of His will. That the revelations to her are beyond all question is sufficiently proved, not only by the many miracles wrought by God Himself to vouch the truth of all He saw fit to manifest to her,

but by the examination of the Church, and by the decrees of the Sovereign Pontiff himself. We are consequently not only to behold as a certainty the fact of these revelations accorded to this saint, but we are to recognize the fruits of these revelations in the many temples erected to the Sacred Heart, in that beautiful worship which has become universal among the faithful, and which the Spirit of the Most High seems now to be awaking, as if to gird up His chosen for a new and more terrible struggle. Two hundred years ago, the Blessed Margaret Mary, born in France, was gifted, from her early youth, with singular purity and innocence. God, who designed so many things for her, proposing to make her a vessel of election from her tenderest age, gave her a share of His cross. "Take my yoke upon you," said He to her, "and learn of me." If you will know the secrets of my

heart, bear my cross. And so, in sickness and in sorrow, in disease and in mental pain from her earliest youth, did her jealous Lover prepare her for that mystery of life He was afterwards to communicate to her. And at last, when the auspicious hour was come, He gave her the reason of all His former dealings with her, and explained to her the ways of His providence. He taught her that He wished her to know, first of all, the immense advantage of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. He opened that heart to her, and He bade her go forward without fear, humble and lowly as she was, a child almost unknown, and, relying upon His strength alone, build up with her hands the edifice of this great and mighty devotion in the Church of God. I cannot better bring before you the language spoken by Almighty God to her, and the favors which she received, than by giving to you her own words,

which are the words also of the Spirit of truth: "Our Lord had bestowed many singular graces upon Margaret Mary, in order to prepare her soul for the work for which He destined her. He had, with this view, favored her also from time to time with some glimpses of his Sacred Heart; but these appear to have reference more immediately to herself. He had opened to her the wound of His sacred side, in which she was to find a place of abode, and a secret charm which was to sweeten every difficulty. The Sacred Heart had been mysteriously represented to her at one time as an ocean of light, in which her own heart, as a dark atom, was absorbed and lost; at another, as an abyss of love, into which she was to plunge herself to escape the abyss of her own misery. It had been laid open to her as a book of life, in which she was to learn the science of divine love; as a

delightful garden, the beauty and fragrance of which was to revive her soul. Being one day before the Blessed Sacrament, she says: 'I felt myself wholly invested with the presence of God, so that I lost all thought of myself and the place where I was, and abandoned myself to the Divine Spirit, yielding up my heart to the power of His love. My Sovereign Master made me repose for a long time upon His Divine Breast, where He discovered to me the marvels of His love and the incomprehensible secrets of His Sacred Heart, which He, up to this time, had kept concealed from me. He opened to me for the first time His divine heart in a manner so real and sensible that He left me no room to doubt of the reality of this grace, in spite of the dread which I had always had of deceiving myself in anything that I say on such matters. He said to me, "My

divine heart is so full of love for men, and for you in particular, that, being unable to contain in itself the flames of its burning charity, it must needs spread them abroad by your means, to manifest itself to them, to enrich them with the treasures it contains. I discover to you the price of these treasures. They contain graces of sanctification and salvation necessary to draw men from the abyss of perdition. I have chosen you, in spite of your unworthiness and ignorance, to accomplish this good design, in order that it may better appear that all hath been done by me." One day, having received from my Divine Saviour a favor almost similar to that bestowed on the beloved disciple on the evening of the Last Supper, the Divine Heart was represented to me as a throne of fiery flame, shedding rays on every side brighter than the sun and transparent as crystal. The wounds which

He received upon the cross appeared there visible; a crown of thorns encircled the Divine Heart, and it was surmounted by a cross. These instruments of His passion signified, as my Divine Master made me understand, that it was the unbounded love which He had for man that had been the source of all His sufferings; that from the first moment of His incarnation all these torments had been present to Him; and that from the first moment the cross had been, so to say, planted in His heart; that from that moment He accepted all the pain and humiliation which His sacred humanity was to suffer during the course of His mortal life, and even the outrages to which His love for men exposed him, until the end of the world, in the Blessed Sacrament. He gave me to understand afterwards that it was the great desire He had to be perfectly loved by men that had made Him form the design of

disclosing to them His Heart, and of giving them, in these latter times, this last effort of His love, by proposing it to them as an object and a means so calculated to engage them to love Him, and love Him solidly, opening to them all the treasures of love, mercy, grace, sanctification, and salvation which it contains, in order that all who should wish to pay, and procure for Him all the honor and love that they can, might be enriched in profusion with the divine treasures of which it is the fruitful and inexhaustible source. He assured me that He took a singular pleasure in being honored on earth under the representation of this heart of flesh, in order, as He said, to touch the insensible hearts of men; and He promised that He would shed in abundance on all who should thus honor Him all the treasures of grace with which it is filled. I called to mind that it was on

this day that my Divine Spouse did me the incomprehensible favor, of which I am so unworthy, of making me repose upon His breast with His beloved disciple, and of giving me His heart, His cross, and His love—His heart, to be my refuge and haven of rest midst the tempests of this stormy sea; His cross, to be my throne of glory, in which I should not only glory, but also rejoice, since there is no good for me but Jesus, His cross and His love; His love, to purify and consume me, and transform me wholly into Himself.”

Such, dearly beloved brethren, is the account of the revelation made by our Blessed Lord himself to his servant, who has been the means of bringing before the faithful in these latter days this great and most wonderful devotion; and now that the Church of God hath placed the Blessed Margaret Mary among the holy

ones, and hath declared her beatitude; now that the Supreme Pontiff is to enroll her in the white throng of virgins and confessors, the Spirit of God seems to descend again, and to call with trumpet-tones to a new understanding and a new appreciation of the revelation which he hath made through this his servant.

## II.

In regard to the *ends* of the devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, they are too many and too great to be spoken of in one single discourse. It will be the purpose of the succeeding lectures of this course to develop more perfectly and plainly the ends for which Almighty God hath revealed, and for which He desires, this devotion. The language of the Supreme Pontiff in the beatification of the Blessed Margaret Mary sets forth from an infallible tongue the very design for

which God manifested this mercy to us: "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, of His exceeding charity having taken upon Himself the weakness of our mortal nature, offering Himself unspotted unto God, upon the altar of the cross, in order to free us from the most hateful slavery of sin, desired nothing so much as to rekindle in the very midst of the souls of men that charity with which His heart is consumed, as we know from the Gospel He declared to His disciples, 'I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?' In order the more to enkindle this fire of charity, he would have the adoration and worship of His Most Sacred Heart established in His Church; for who, indeed, is there so hard-hearted and unfeeling as not to be moved to make return of love to that amiable heart, which was pierced and wounded with the lance, in order that our souls

might find therein a hiding-place and secure retreat, to which we might betake ourselves in safety from the attacks and snares of our enemies? Who would not be provoked to show every mark of love and honor to that Most Sacred Heart, from the wound of which flowed forth water and blood, the source of our life and salvation?" I will briefly, then, say that the ends for which the Church of Christ desires this devotion to be propagated in our hearts are that we may, first of all, *know* better our Divine Lord, that we may *love* Him better, and that we may find our *rest* in Him. It is our first need to know better our Blessed Lord, whom to know is everlasting life; to learn this, the science of the saints, its beginning and its end, its alpha and its omega. For, to understand the mystery of the Word made flesh, to know that God became man, to write the lessons of that sacred incarna-

tion upon our souls—this it is to enter into the region of everlasting truth and ever-increasing life. “No man knoweth the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.” God speaketh in these latter days only by His Son: “God, who in divers times and the days past hath spoken to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to man by His Son, whom He hath made heir of all things, by whom also He made the world.” He hath brought His Only-begotten into the earth, clothed in our nature, man of man, as he is God of God, and He hath bidden the angels to bow down before Him. When He bringeth His Only-begotten into the world, He says, “Let all the angels of God adore Him,” and “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. The sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated ini-

quity; therefore shalt Thou be clothed with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." The humanity of the Son of God is the revelation of the latter days. Through His humanity does He speak to man; by His humanity doth man live. The Holy Church herself is only the sacrament of that unity that bindeth man to man, and man to Christ; and the throne from which the Incarnate God reigneth now on earth is the Divine Eucharist, the altar of the living Bread that came down from heaven. Here dwelleth the Redeemer; here the Redeemer and the redeemed are made one. And so, when we intensify our adoration to the humanity of the Word made flesh, and bring our hearts to bow down before the loving and bleeding heart of the Son of God, then it is that a light from the far-off heaven seems to come down into our souls, and we begin to

learn the mystery of God made man. And who shall teach us that mystery but the Sacred Heart itself? The mightiest intellect would fall and perish before that blazing light. Who can look into the glory of the Infinite, or stand before His sapphire throne? But the Sacred Heart, with its beating of love and mercy, will bear us on, and it shall teach us, in the days of our pilgrimage and in the hour of our triumph, what God incarnate is; what His mercy is, what are the riches of His life. And if thus we are taught by this devotion to know better our Lord, surely we shall love Him. When the glare of this deceitful world, with all its charms, shall pass away from us; when that which now seemeth to the worldly eye to attract shall take its true shape before us; when the beauty of the living God, with all His loveliness, shall come into our souls, how shall not the passion of

our regenerate hearts flow forth to that mighty King, who, for our sakes, became man! Thus the Sacred Heart will win us by its seductions, will take us from all human affections and human idols, and bear us to that everlasting love which shall never change; the love that shall one day encompass our souls, and fill us with its beatitude, from which all created things shall pass away. Then alone shall the soul find rest and repose in its Creator. No rest in this troubled earth; no rest amid the warfare of our passions and the battle with our sins; no rest amid the wrecks and ruins of our fallen nature; no rest until the heart shall unite itself to the Sacred Heart of the Man-God, and its beatings shall be the beatings of the Infinite Love, its impulses the impulses of the Incarnate Word. Then shall there be rest for ever—rest on earth, triumph and glory in our struggles, victory over sin,

conquest over death; for our eyes shall be lifted up to that blessed scene, where we shall behold the Man-God, not, as once, standing in the hall of Pilate, clothed with the robe of derision, and the crown of thorns upon His head; not, as in Gethsemani, in lowliness and great humility, but in the majesty of heaven, in the rest of the Eternal Trinity, where the great deeps of the Sacred Heart shall be broken up, and its torrents of love shall flow forth to enrich the celestial garden and the souls of saints for ever and ever; and the voice of our triumph shall be, "*Behold the Man*, the Redeemer, the mighty God, the Word made flesh, in whom we live, and in whose Sacred Heart alone shall our hearts find repose."

the wonderful blessing of this devotion which He now desires us to pay to Him in these latter days. Moreover, the progress of this devotion throughout the Church during the two last centuries is another evidence of Heavenly favor, and stamps it with the seal of the Divine approbation. This devotion, always in substance existing in the Church of God (for it is nothing else than the devotion to the sacred humanity of our Lord, and the most intense devotion to that sacred humanity)—this devotion now, from its humble beginning, has become the great devotion of the whole Church. Religious orders have vied with each other how they might most honor the Sacred Heart of our Blessed Lord. Religious communities have sprung up and been organized for the sole end that they might worship the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and lead all within the sphere of their influence thus

to adore and love Him. And now, with the infallible voice of the Vicar of Christ and the voice of our pastors, the whole company of the faithful arises with a new impulse, and turns its tenderest praise to the Sacred Side of Jesus, and calls upon the Heart of the Man-God to be its refuge and its strength. Such a devotion within the body of Christ—that living temple which the Holy Ghost fills and vivifies—is the work of the breath of the Spirit of God. No mere human devotion can ever exist within the living Spouse of Christ; for God is the author of her life and the author of her worship; and as He leads her by the green pastures, which day by day more and more refresh her, so doth He light her with the illumination of His Divine Spirit upon the way, by which she may show forth His faith and bring all mankind to the obedience of His Sacred Humanity.

We purpose, therefore, to-night, dear

## LECTURE SECOND.

### *FRUITS OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.*

“Put me as a seal upon Thy heart, as a seal upon Thy arm ; for love is strong as death. Many waters cannot quench charity, neither can the floods drown it : if a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing.”—*Canticles* viii. 6, 7.

E have seen, my dear brethren, that our Blessed Lord, in these latter days, hath willed that His Church should worship Him by a new devotion, and hath commanded, by a special revelation made to one of His chosen servants, that His faithful people should approach Him by a particular adoration of His Sacred Heart. In regard to the verity of this revelation we can be in no doubt, because the words of the saint through whom He was pleased to make known this message of love to His

Church, were confirmed by extraordinary graces, and even authenticated by miracles. It pleased Almighty God, in thus revealing new tenderness towards His chosen, to confirm the message He was pleased to send, by many miracles, as proof of His divine interposition; and as these miracles have been examined and approved by the Holy See, we can be in no doubt in regard to their verity, or in regard to the truth of the revelation they were worked to confirm. Moreover, this message of love in regard to His Sacred Heart has been approved and confirmed by the infallible voice of the Vicar of Christ on earth. Our Holy Father, in proposing the Blessed Margaret Mary as a saint, to be honored at the altars of the Church, expressly declares that it pleased Almighty God to select her from among the many of His faithful children, and in and through her to convey to His Church the treasures of His Sacred Heart and

brethren, to bring before you some of the fruits of this devotion, thus revealed by our Lord to His Church in these days, thus desired by the Son of God, thus, as it were, making reparation to Him for the countless sins, for the fearful ingratitude, of the human race. Let us ask that Sacred Heart, to whom we are about to consecrate ourselves and all that we have and all that we are, so to influence our hearts with His holy love that from this brief consideration of the fruits of our devotion we may gather new fidelity, new loyalty, to Him who became man and died for our redemption.

The fruits of this devotion, of which I shall speak to-night, are

First, an increase of faith, which receives new life, enters on a new sphere, and achieves new victories.

Secondly, a better knowledge of the way of redemption and of the interior of our Divine Lord.

Thirdly, a fuller appreciation of the blessed Eucharist, and a more lively devotion to it.

Fourthly, new zeal for the interests of Christ on earth; and,

Lastly, love stronger than death, which is the nuptial-tie that shall bind the soul to a nearer embrace with its Redeemer.

### I.

An increase of faith, which, by means of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, receives new life, enters upon a new sphere, and wins new victories. Faith is that gift of God by which, through His light, we see the things that are invisible to mortal eyes. The things that are known to reason and known to our nature are not objects of faith. Faith is that spiritual eye by which we see the things that God may be pleased to re-

veal, the things that concern His own Divine Being, the things that belong to His kingdom, the things that concern our relations to Him, and the blessed way by which He has been pleased, of His pure mercy, to redeem us from sin and from death. Faith is the substance of things that are unseen, and the evidence of things that appear not. Faith opens my vision to all that God may please to make known to me. By nature my vision is bound by the things of sense, and my reason can never ascend beyond its own sphere. By faith I look into the very mysteries of God; by faith I ascend above my own sphere and the plane of my nature, and I am in the ranks of Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the angelic creation which look into the face of God and behold His glory. For just in proportion as I see God, and know Him and the truths of His Divine Na-

ture, do I ascend above myself and the plane on which I was created, and become more and more like unto my God. This faith, this spiritual eye by which we behold the things that are invisible, is the gift of God bestowed upon man by His pure mercy. Man cannot believe without the aid of God's grace. And God sends into the soul a new and especial grace, by which it receives an aptitude to see the things that He reveals, and by which it receives power to shut its sight against the things that simply belong to the world or are opposed to faith. This gift of faith is given to us in our regeneration, whereby we are born of water and the Holy Ghost, and are made the children of God. By regeneration we receive new faculties, we are translated, we are elevated above the sphere of our nature, we become supernatural, members of Christ, children of

God, and heirs of heaven. By water and the Holy Ghost are we born again. No man can see God, saith our Divine Lord, unless he be born again of water and the Holy Spirit; and so, from His high throne, God the Redeemer, by the power of His own generation, pours into our souls that precious gift of new birth by which we receive the spiritual sight, and by which our eyes are lifted from things sensible to the things celestial and eternal. And this gift of faith, given in our regeneration, is conveyed to us by the humanity of God the Word. That little Child born in Bethlehem, to whose manger with the faithful now we are hastening, is the author of our new birth. "To them that received Him He gave power to become the sons of God, who are born, not according to the will of the flesh, nor according to the will of man, but according to the will of God." That little Child

of Bethlehem, born into this world man of man, and yet God of God; God subsisting in human nature; is the author of our regeneration; for it is by the touch, and the power, and the grace of His Sacred Humanity that our humanity is lifted up and translated and transformed; and the powers of our spiritual being, which we receive in our regeneration, are the powers of His Sacred Humanity transferred to us. For in that regeneration our bodies and our souls are made to touch the body and the soul of the Incarnate God, and the light that comes into our intelligence is light from the soul of God the Word; and the cleansing of our bodies is from the purity of the body of the child Jesus. So, dear brethren, every devotion that tends to bring that Sacred Humanity in its reality before us is an increase of faith and of divine power to our spiritual life.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Most Holy Redeemer is the most intense and the most loving devotion to His Humanity, for in it we recognize not only the *truth* of His Humanity, but the *power* of His Humanity; in it we recognize not only that He, being God, was made man, but that He came into this world with all our faculties of soul and body, and with a heart to love us, a heart to be filled with His own infinite charity. And as thus, according to the language consecrated by the Supreme Pontiff, we turn with affection to that Sacred Heart which was pierced for us, wherein was the wound from which flowed forth the water and the blood for our cleansing; we bring before us, by a new and a vivid light, the truth of that Sacred Humanity, and we bow down before it not only with our intelligence, but with all the affections of our hearts.

When thus not only our souls, but our hearts, with their supremest love, have bowed down before God the Word, adoring His Sacred Humanity, then it is that the human hands of our Redeemer take us and lead us along the ways of faith, the ways of light, the paths of God's wondrous revelation. The truths of our mighty religion, which are a riddle or an enigma to so many, which are dark and so hardly understood by the worldling or the false philosopher, are gleams of light from the very throne of God Himself, where the Good Shepherd leads us by His own blessed hands, and guides us to the green pastures; where, daily coming more and more near to our souls, He tells us of the richness of Divine love, the power of Divine faith, and the glory of that system of redemption by which God was pleased to renovate the world. And so the victories of faith

are ever new, for they are victories of God incarnate. The miracles of sanctity within the Church, the examples of heroic virtue; confessors giving their lives to God; virgins consecrating their all to their Blessed Redeemer; examples of saintliness such as have never been known without the Zion of our Lord; these are only the proofs of the presence of the Incarnate Word within His Church. It is His Humanity walking before us in the greatness of His strength. It is His blessed and holy life, which He lives over in His children. It is Christ redeeming His redeemed. And what, then, to the soul that has caught a glimpse of this blessed light and God so near to it—what, to such a soul, is this earth, with all its vanities and all its false attractions? What are the vain temptations of our passions and of our appetites? What are the golden crowns

that this world can offer? What are the laurel wreaths it extends to us? When the soul feels the power of God within it, it rushes on to *the true* and to the invisible; and so faith wins new victories by the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

## II.

We also gain by this devotion a better knowledge of the way of our redemption and of the interior of our Blessed Redeemer. Why did God so love man? Mystery of all mysteries, never to be explained; mystery far exceeding that even of God's being or His Trinity, three persons in unity of essence! What is there so wonderful in all that we know or ever can learn as the love of God to our human race—a fallen race; a race in misery; a race whose mightiest thanksgiving

or praise could never add one ray to His essential glory; a race whose best service could never touch the unvarying beatitude of God, three in person and one in essence, ever blessed, ever rejoicing in His undisturbed felicity? Why did God, who hath all things, and who can want nothing, so love man, perhaps the very weakest of all His creatures; perhaps the most miserable of the races that fill the countless worlds that roll before Him in space? And if God so loved man, and so purposed to redeem him from sin and the misery of his own transgression, oh! tell me why did God redeem him by His own incarnation and death? Oh! what dream of seraph or of angel in his highest bliss could ever have imagined the wonderful condescension of God the Son? If He were to purpose to save our race from the ruin of its iniquities, why did He

not send a glorious angel in his purity and his blessedness, and let him come to earth to be, as it were, one of us, to suffer according to His will, and to die? Why did He not choose one of our race, like unto ourselves, and build him up in masterful sanctity and nobility of grace, and let Him stand a sacrifice for the sins of the world? Who would have dreamed that God would make Himself man? And, oh! if I had known that He was to become man, and that in the counsels of His eternal wisdom He had proposed to take our nature upon Him, would I ever have imagined that He would have become man in the stable at Bethlehem, or died like a writhing worm upon the cross of Calvary? Oh! no; I should have imagined an Eden, some secluded Paradise, filled with the choicest fruits and flowers of earth, that should exhale their sweetness

before Him. I should have imagined Him there, amid the choirs of angels and of saints, to be seen by those who were to be purified by long penance and contrition, or who never lost their innocence. Could I ever have dreamed that He would have become a child in the stable at Bethlehem; that He would have cast away all the honors of earth as things unworthy of the majesty of God; that He would have made His habitation with publicans and sinners; that He would have gone out among the dregs of the earth to seek and to save that which was lost? Would I ever have dreamed that He would have been an outcast from home and from friends, His bed the hard earth and His pillow the rocky stone? Would I ever have imagined that He, my God, should have been a prisoner, wounded with thorns and lashed with the scourge? Could I ever have imagined

that He would allow His own creatures to crown Him with thorns, and to press them into His sacred head? Would I have ever dreamed that Love incarnate would condescend so low as to hang, the very beauty of heaven and the very image of God, on the ignominious cross, that there He might pour out His blood as if it were the very dross of the earth? Oh! no; and I need a new light, I need a revelation, that shall teach me why it was that God so loved me, and why it was that He sought thus to humble Himself, that He might win my wayward heart to Himself. And so when the Sacred Heart of the Man-God is opened before me, and it beats responsive to my own, and my head is only allowed to rest on that Sacred Breast, I behold the promptings of an infinite love; I stand by an ocean without a shore, whose tides roll before me in the unending distance. This

is the way in which God purposed to redeem me. When I had fallen so low that there was none to save and no power to deliver me; when my humanity, made in the image of God, became so foul that the sight of the angels even was withdrawn from it, then my God descended to it. When the first Adam, of the earth indeed, and earthly, and yet innocent and holy, and gifted with the power of the Divine Spirit, and made a son of God, failed and passed away, and lost me Eden; then the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, the mighty God, came to my rescue with all the power and the affections of man. He chose to cure the polluted spring at its source; to heal all my maladies at their spring. He saw fit to bring on earth again a pure and spotless humanity; a humanity as glorious as that of our first father, Adam, when he was ushered into this world, and trod upon

the virgin soil of Paradise, but still the humanity of God, instinct with life, filled with the divine power, the body, and the soul of God the Word. Now He seeks to make me His own by taking me from that humanity which failed and lost me Eden, and bringing me over to that Divine Humanity which can never fail. Now He seeks to lift me up from my blindness and from my degradation; to unite His soul to my soul, and His body to my body; and to make me a member of the second Adam, and so to pass me over to a living race that shall never die, to whom the portals of heaven shall ever be open; for God our Redeemer hath entered there, and our humanity there sits enthroned. So this Sacred Heart of my Blessed Redeemer speaketh to me the lesson of His divine tenderness; tells me of that infinite love, the very sight of which bewilders me; and lifts up my heart to

pray, to hope, to desire that I may one day be raised to a capacity of love that God shall accept, that, if not on earth, at least in eternity, when I shall be fully redeemed and glorified, my own poor wayward heart shall beat responsive to His, and my affections be wholly given to Him.

### III.

So does the Sacred Heart of my Blessed Lord give me a new appreciation of the Divine Eucharist and a more lively devotion to it. We believe in the real presence of God the Son upon our altars. We know, far better than we know the things which we behold with our eyes, that when the mighty, creative word is spoken by those whom God the Word hath sent out and commissioned, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and that the hu-

manity of God the Son, His body, soul, and divinity, is on our altars and offered in sacrifice for our sins. We know that whenever the priest of God cometh before the divine altar, he doth lift up to God, not the lamb whose blood sprinkled the ancient mercy-seat, not the blood of bulls and of goats, but the true Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, by whose grace and mercy our sins are washed away. And we know that, with every sacrifice, we come, as it were, again before Calvary; the cross is set up on our altars, and the Victim of salvation is offered for us. Wonderful and mighty is this truth, the very strength of our religion, the very power of the Catholic Church, the foundation of its unseen might, and the source of its everlasting youth; the fountain of all that is holy and all that is living on earth, for there is no fountain of life but the Word

made flesh. And yet how poorly we realize this great and momentous truth; how hardly we rise up to the dignity of our worship; how far off from the beauty and the glory of our sanctuary are our feeble and our sinful hearts! When the power of the Sacred Heart of the Man-God is brought before us, it teaches us by love the mystery of the Divine Eucharist; it writes it, not simply upon our intelligence, but impresses it upon our hearts, teaching us how God loved us, and how He loves us still. The humiliation of the cross was not enough. He must find out, from the very burning raptures of His own love for us, a way to ascend into heaven, there to reign on His mediatorial throne for us, and yet not to leave us. He must find out a way to erect the saving cross everywhere throughout the earth where there are souls to weep for their sins and to cry for mercy and for life.

He must find a way to give His Sacred Humanity all to the objects of His love, to hold nothing back. "Better," said He to His apostles, "is it for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Paraclete will not come to you," and when He shall come to you, He shall teach you all the mysteries of my life.

So, the Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord is ours, not simply in heaven, where the glorified Humanity sits on the sapphire throne, surrounded by angels and by saints, by cherubim and seraphim, who bow down in speechless adoration; where, around the ever-opened wound, are gathered the praises of saints and of angels; the Sacred Heart of the Man-God is ours, in our sacrifice, in the Bread of everlasting life from which we feed, that we may find our way to the mountain of God and the celestial country. And so the Sacred Heart of our

Blessed Lord teaches us the nature of that sacrifice which, day after day, prompted by love so prodigal, and worthy of God alone, sends up to heaven the wonderful merits of God the Word made man, His passion, His tears, His blood, His sorrows, His cross. The Son of God remains a sacrifice to the end of time, and that Sacred Heart is offered for us day by day on the many thousand altars of the faithful. There abides infinite love; there is infinite mercy offered to the Eternal Father; there the mysteries of the cross are renewed. Here in this Divine Eucharist does God give Himself all to us. He cometh in sacraments which are the channels of His divine power, and works mightily as a God. He toucheth the regenerating water, and out of it living creatures spring forth, endowed with a supernatural life. In all the sacraments He giveth of His divine

energy, and worketh the sanctification of man, but in the adorable Eucharist He giveth *Himself*, all that He is; and He is God, and, therefore, everything is in the Divine Eucharist. His precious body and blood are made the food of our regenerate life. God giveth to us Himself; our bodies, washed in His precious blood, are fed with His divine body. His very blood courses in our veins, that we may live to God. His soul cometh and toucheth our soul, and the scales of sense fall away before the power of that mighty intelligence. Oh! this Eucharistic Lord, this Sacred Heart, will teach us what He is, and what is His quickening power; and when we have knelt in adoration before that Open Side, and have drawn from the fountains of the Saviour the waters of unending life, then, more and more, till earth shall pass away and all shadows be gone, shall we, with our

heart and with our souls, be made one with this Divine Victim, who is our God and our all.

#### IV.

From such a living devotion to Christ springeth forth a new zeal for all His interests on earth. He came to redeem us from our miseries and our iniquities. He came to renovate our fallen nature. He came the second Adam, and He is the Mighty King; King of kings, and Lord of lords. He hath a kingdom on earth, wherein He rules and guides His flock. "I appoint unto you a kingdom," said He to His apostles, "even as my Father hath appointed unto me." Go ye, therefore, and reduce all nations to the obedience of the faith. What are the interests of earth, the interests of worldly ambition, the interests of kingdoms and states, com-

pared with the interests of this, our Mighty King? And when the Sacred Heart hath taught us how to love, how to know Him, how to understand His way of redemption; then it is that from that Open Side is born a new zeal that kindles our own souls, and lights up all our powers with a heavenly flame. It is not the light of earth, it is not a created fire that dies so soon away; it is the fire of the living God that can never perish. "Sacred Heart of Jesus, inflamed with love of me, inflame my heart with love of Thee." And when thus I have learned how to know my Lord, behold I have no other interests on earth but His. First, to bring my soul in perfect subjection to His divine will, is my aim. Hallowed be Thy blessed name on earth, even as it is in heaven! Oh! that every affection of my soul and every faculty of my body might be consecrated to Thee

and that Thou mightest live and reign within me! Oh! that my heart, by the power of Thine Heart, might rise above all earthly affections, and give itself to Thee! Oh! that the darkness of my sins might pass away before Thy heavenly light. Oh! that Thou mightest enter and bid all shadows for ever to retire! Then will I run in the way of Thy commandments, and follow Thee in the desolate earth, that I for Thee may win souls to their Redeemer. Then will I go into the desert, as Thou didst go, leaving the ninety-nine, to seek the lost and ruined sheep. Then the soul, even in its wreck and ruin, will become beautiful to mine eyes; then, even in the poor, and lost, and sinful, shall I behold the image of my Saviour and the marks of His most precious blood. So will I run with piety and with zeal to gather from the ways of sin and darkness those that wander,

and to open to them the tenderness of the Heart of the Man-God. Then shall I yearn for the perfection of those that love Him; then shall I be jealous for His cause and for the purity of His saints. Then shall I learn how that tender Heart is most jealous in regard to those He loves, and how the slightest offence or infidelity will wound and grieve Him. Then shall I know how much more doth He stoop with yearning love over one soul that serves Him well, than over thousands that love Him coldly and give Him only half their hearts. Then shall I yearn that others may know what I have known, and from the light kindled in my own breast shall I seek to inflame the hearts of others. And the world before me, with its kingdoms and its empires, and its bubbles of ambition, and its dreams of power; what shall that world be to me but the footstool of my Redeemer and the sphere

of His everlasting empire? And where I have found life, there shall I carry, with the power of the Sacred Heart itself, the tenderness and the zeal which He has shed abroad within my own soul. So to that home in Heaven, whither I journey, will I travel. The past shall fade from my memory, with its cares and its toils. According to His blessed will, I will take my cross and follow after Him, even in blood-stained steps, if I can but see His dear form before me, to lead me amid the darkness and the gloom. There is no darkness where I can but discern His face. Thither shall I travel, I and the children that God shall give me, till I shall reach my home, the only home that my regenerate nature can ever know; the home where the Sacred Heart of my incarnate Lord shall be my rest for ever and ever.

## V.

Here, then, springeth up a love stronger than death, a love that nothing can quench. I will ask my Lord to put me as a seal upon His heart, and as a seal upon His arm: a seal upon His heart, that my affections may never waver; a seal upon His right arm, that all my love and all my energy may be for Him, and for Him alone. And I know that many waters; the waters of affliction, the waters of distress, the waters of death, cannot quench charity, neither can the rising floods drown it. If I give all that I have, all the substance of my house, for love, I shall despise it as nothing, that I may honor Him, and be found in Him, closely united in His nuptial embrace. Love is the mighty ruler that guides the human heart to great and noble deeds, to manly sacrifices. Love flieth faster than the lightning to the

object of its affection. Love springeth, and runneth, and cannot be bound. This is the love that cometh from the Sacred Heart of the Son of God, and is born within my soul, to lead me to that more perfect union with Him. Even though I am in the midst of the troubles of earth, in the strong battle with my own passions, in the conflict with principalities and with powers, yet still the love that I have to my Redeemer shall lead me on, and my heart, sealed to His, and my right arm, joined to His, shall never fail me. Day by day the creature shall withdraw from me, shall become more and more faint to my vision ; day by day shall worldly ties have less power to bind me ; and day by day nearer and nearer shall come to me my Lord. By His beauty, by His loveliness, shall I be entranced ; by His tenderness shall I be led to seek Him, and to know Him, and to find Him for

ever. So, with the faithful throughout the earth, who now are hastening around the altars of the incarnate Lord with their tribute of praise and of adoration, will I come, and my consecration shall be to the Sacred Heart of my Redeemer.

O Sacred Heart! filled with infinite love, broken by my ingratitude, and pierced by my sins, and yet loving me still, accept the consecration that I make to Thee of all that I am, and all that I have. Take every faculty of my soul and of my body, and only draw me day by day nearer and nearer to Thy sacred side, and there, as I can bear the lesson, teach me Thy blessed ways.

## LECTURE THIRD.

### *THE AGENCY OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART IN THE WORK OF REPARATION.*

“My soul is sorrowful, even unto death; stay you here and watch with me.”—ST. MATTHEW xxvi. 38.



THESE words, my dear brethren, open to us a most wonderful secret of the interior of the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ. They present to us His Heart, suffering and broken down with woe. There is something terrible in the agony of our Redeemer in the Garden of Gethsemani which rises far above all human comprehension. It was the only time that He seemed willing to express the weight of sorrow which He so patiently and so lovingly bore. Here He seemed, as it were, to be unmanned. Though He had often faced death, and had even rejoiced at its nearness, as the fulfil-

ment of all the prophets had foretold concerning Himself, He now appears wholly overwhelmed with grief. He had said to His eternal Father: "I come to do thy will, O my God! A body hast thou prepared for me," and "I am come on earth to be baptized with blood; and how am I straitened till that baptism be accomplished!" And yet, having offered himself, in the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist, which He had just established; having sung the canticles of the Passover, He goes out with His Apostles to the shades of the Garden of Olives, and seems to lose all control over Himself; He seems to faint; He can scarcely drag His body along; He trembles, and is overcome with an unwonted tremor. He who had been the support of His disciples, who had led them through scenes of danger, and had even allowed them to rest on His strong and almighty courage: He calls

out to them for their sympathy and their protection. "Do not leave me alone; a weight of woe is coming over me that, it seems to me, will overwhelm me. Stay by me and watch with me; my soul is so sorrowful that it seems to me I cannot live." What were the causes of this tremendous weight of agony that thus overflowed the soul of the Son of God? Behold the scene in the Garden of Gethsemani, as the Evangelists have portrayed it to us. See the beauty of the Father's image, the glory of His person, Light of Light, and God of God, lying prostrate upon the green ground, and writhing in agony, until the fountain of His precious blood gusheth forth from the very pores of His skin, and bedeweth the soil with the sacred torrent. See Him lift Himself in agony and distress: "Father, if it be possible, put away this chalice from me; but nevertheless, not as

I will, but as Thou wilt." See Him three times go back to His disciples and beg them to watch with Him: "Do not sleep! Do not leave me alone! What! can you not watch here one hour?" O my beloved brethren! there is in this scene something which far transcends all our knowledge or our comprehension of human suffering. The bright angels of God descended from their thrones; the angels of the incarnation, the angels of the adorable Eucharist, came in their brilliant ranks to wipe the tears from the eyes of the Son of God, and to bind up the wounds of His bleeding Heart. If we enter into the causes of this agony of our Lord, we shall no doubt find it in the language of the prophet, where he predicted that God would lay upon His incarnate Son the iniquities of all mankind: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom shall the arm of the

Lord be revealed; for He shall grow up as a tender plant before Him, and as a root out of a thirsty ground. There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness, and we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness that we should be desirous of Him; despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and His look, as it were, hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows, and we have thought him, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted; but He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; every one hath turned aside unto his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all."

To think that words like these should be spoken of the very brightness of the image of God ; that He should be despised and rejected, marred more than man, until there was no sightliness in Him ; until He, who is the very beauty and the light of heaven, should no longer seem to be desired. In this tremendous moment God laid upon Him all our sins ; our sins of thought and word and deed, the rebellions of the whole world. Blighted hearts, faces of woe, and images of death, were all before Him then ; and no wonder that the blood rushed from the fountain of His Sacred Heart, and gushed for very agony from the very pores of His Sacred Body. But surely not only was it our sin that then and there so grievously oppressed Him ; it was the sense of our ingratitude, the deep and overwhelming sense of our baseness. Knowing, as He knew, the value of every drop of His

most precious blood, counting with the omniscience of God every pang He was to endure, knowing how millions of worlds could be redeemed by even one sigh, how was His Heart not broken at the thought that, after all, so many souls should be lost, and that from human hearts which He came to redeem He should receive only coldness, indifference, and ingratitude! The cross was to be erected by His own nation; the lost sheep of the House of Israel were to gather around it, and insult the throes of His dying agony; and souls afterwards washed in His most precious blood were, from day to day, to crucify Him afresh, and to put Him to an open shame before man.

So the agony of the Son of God endures; so His passion continues before us, and He cometh to us to-night with the language which He addressed to His disciples: "My soul is sorrowful, even unto

death. These are unloving days; these are days when the world is arrayed against me, when my chosen are cold to me and forgetful of me. These are days when I feel more than ever the ingratitude of mankind, whose nature I took, that I might approach them with love, and win them by tenderness. Therefore, can you not stay with me, and watch with me? Will you leave me alone to bear my burden of grief? Will you not come with your hearts and with all your sympathy to sustain me in my struggle with the ingratitude of men?" Yes, Blessed Lord, we have heard the sound of Thy voice. It hath come to us in these latter days. Thou, by Thy mercy, hast touched our souls. We will approach Thy Gethsemani; we will go down to the olive shades, and there will we watch with Thee; and we will pray that Thou wilt teach us how to sympathize with Thy woe, that

Thou wilt enable us to look into the deep of God's mercy and the incomprehensible mystery of God's incarnate Son crucified, neglected, and forgotten. So before us in our vigil to-night will pass the anguish of the soul of Jesus Christ, the reparation which we can offer Him, and, lastly, the agency of the Devotion of the Sacred Heart in this great work.

## I.

The anguish of the soul of Jesus Christ is our meditation.

1. Think for one moment of that pure soul, created by God, the very noblest of all His works, gifted with the very highest powers, and filled with light and life. Think how sensitive was that soul of our Lord to ingratitude. In proportion to the nobility of our own natures do our feel-

ings become refined; and our capacity for pain depends upon the cultivation of our hearts and the resources of love that lie hidden within them. Think how sensitive, then, must have been the soul of our Divine Lord, the most glorious of the spirits that God ever created, the most pure and most noble. Think, also, of that soul united to the Divine Word, possessed of omniscience to gaze into the hearts of all His creatures. He did not simply look, as we can look, upon one face; He looked upon all the faces of mankind, and He looketh now upon all human hearts. He doth not judge, as we are forced to judge, simply by the exterior, and take men according to their words and their professions. He often seeth, where the profession is the loudest and the vow the strongest, that there is infidelity, that His service is only made a stepping-stone to some earthly end. He beholdeth how sel-

fishness reigneth over those who profess to love Him; and hence a power of suffering, far more than we can conceive of, belongeth to the holy soul of our Lord, from its sensitive nature and from its omniscience, before which all human hearts are laid bare.

2. Now, this soul of our Divine Lord beholdeth the sins of all mankind. What is sin, even in our conception? It is the greatest evil of which man can know; we have no language to state all the malignity of sin. It would even scale the throne of God. It would even put out the light of His Divine attributes. There is nothing which mortal sin would not accomplish if it could. And if to the human eye sin be so dreadful and so fearful, what must it be to the Divine eye, to the nature of God? Then the incarnate Lord, dwelling here among us, the glory of God on earth, beheld the

iniquities of all mankind, sins against God the Creator, and sins against God the Redeemer. God by His creation becometh our Sovereign Lord; all our faculties are His; we derive from Him the blessings of life and of health, and the physical faculties by which we are bound to serve Him. How great must that evil be, then, to prostitute the work of God; to deny our allegiance to Him who created us out of nothing, sustaining us continually by the same creative act; to turn against Him the very powers which He supports, and to make them the instruments of rebellion! Think of the glorious angels who in one moment, by an act of pride and disobedience, fell from God and became wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. But, oh! what is their transgression to ours, which we have the power so often to bring into our souls,

rebellling thereby against the very highest obligations we owe to our Creator? But our Blessed Lord not only beheld sin as an offence against God, who made us out of nothing, and hath given us our life, with all its blessings; but he looked upon it as an offence against the Redemption, against the most precious blood of God's Eternal Son. He might have redeemed us in other ways; He has seen fit to redeem us by becoming man, and bringing Himself to the humiliation of the cross, by pouring out His most precious blood to wash away our defilement. And this Redemption, while it sets before us the infinite love of the Highest, also brings it into our power to commit an unequalled crime; man can reject his God, man can take his incarnate Maker, and insult Him, and bind Him, and nail Him to the cross. "Come, this is the heir; let us kill Him," said

the husbandmen, "and the inheritance shall be ours." Because of God's very love to us, it is in our power to put to death His Son, to crucify Him on the cross, and to crucify Him afresh in our hearts. Who will wonder, then, that the precious blood, which was so soon to be despised and rejected of men, and trodden under foot, as if it were the waste waters of the earth, should gush forth with the sweat of agony; when the Heart of Jesus Christ knew so well its value, and counted all its crystal drops, with which the very Word of God subsisted? Think how our crimes against the Redemption must have overwhelmed the Son of God in the momentous hour of His agony.

3. Our Lord not only beholds sin, but He beholds Himself rejected and cast out by mankind; and as He knoweth what He would be to the sinner, how He would

embrace him with the tenderness of His mercy, and heal all his wounds, He knoweth how great is that sin, and how fearful are its consequences. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him without measure, and He came to preach the Gospel to the meek; to bring the message of peace to them that were bound; to release the captives; to heal the sick and the weary; and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. He is that good Samaritan who can come where man is most weary and wounded, and can pour out oil and wine with heavenly consolation. He only can touch the ruined heart; He only can rebuild the wrecks of virtue; He only can speak peace where sin hath entered, and all that is beautiful in the human soul is destroyed. And how the Redeemer loveth to go in the waste places of the earth, and in the deserts, to gather from the by-ways the poor, lost, and ruined sheep,

and to bear them upon His bleeding shoulders back to the haven of everlasting rest! Who can tell the infinite tenderness and consolation that flow from the sacred side of Christ the Redeemer? But, alas! how is He rejected by men! Who are they that reject the Son of God and His mission now on earth? Those who in these latter days dare to deny His Divinity in the face of the miracles of the Holy Scriptures, in face of reason, in the face of the miracles of nineteen centuries, in the face of the greatest of all miracles, the perpetuity of His Divine Church; who dare to call the Son of the Most High a mere man, and therefore an impostor. O cruel, heartless, ungrateful man, to turn from your God when He came to you in love; to deny His Divinity, and to call Him an impostor; for if He was not God, as He claimed to be, He was only an impostor and the leader of the false pro-

phets. There are many, alas!—God be merciful to them and forgive them!—there are many in this day who deny the divine character of the Son of God. But these are not the only ones who reject Him. He is rejected by those who deny His humanity; He is rejected by those who profess to believe in Him, and who do not serve Him with fidelity; He is rejected by the cold and unloving hearts of those who are dedicated to His service; He is rejected by those who, day after day, seek their rest and their happiness in the perishing things of earth. Oh! was ever ingratitude like that which is poured upon the Son of Man? Where are the faithful hearts who live for Him, the loving souls that are given all to Him; the few elect who kneel around His Tabernacles, not forgetful of the mercy of their Redeemer, and ever praying for greater and greater union with

Him? And these elect of God are the only ones who do not reject Him.

4. There are those also who reject His Church, His spouse, born from His sacred side, filled with His life, and sent into the world to accomplish the saving work of the Incarnate God. The soul of Christ, ever abiding in this living Church, beholdeth with agony and with fear the attacks of the world and of the multitude upon His divine spouse. The beauty of the King's daughter is from God. He hath built up her towers and fashioned her bulwarks. All her exterior grace cometh from Him. The beauty of her worship, the glory of her liturgy, the strength and grace of her exterior life, all are from God. Her interior beauty is the fruit of her union to her Divine Master. The purity that gushes from the altars of the Living God, innocence; freedom from this world's guile; confessorship for the truth;

victory over self; the crown of virgins that, discarding all other lovers, have found their only rest in the Sacred Side of their Master; a priesthood that girdles the earth with its deeds of self-sacrifice, carrying to every man the sound of the Gospel; an interior life of faith in the unseen; these are the wrought gold that covereth the daughter of the King. And this Church of Christ is the only means on earth to find Him who is our redemption. Vainly shall man seek beyond the Zion of God for that union with Christ; for His sacred humanity filleth only the temples in which he dwelleth, and the grace that goeth from Him runneth down even to the very borders of the garments of His spouse. Think you that the suffering Heart of Jesus Christ doth not feel for the trials and persecutions of His Church? Think you that it is not the denial of Himself when His truth is denied? Hath

He not said, "He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that receiveth you receiveth me"? Think you not that this is His kingdom on earth, mighty and immortal, that goeth forth to conquer in His name, whose victories are of Him, and whose sufferings are also His? Think you not that the Son of God liveth in His Church, and leadeth her through battles of suffering and death?

5. But, dear brethren, it is in the Divine Eucharist that man has most power to treat his God with ingratitude, and it is here that the broken Heart of the Saviour of the world suffereth the most keenly. Think what the Blessed Eucharist is, and how it is possible there to treat Almighty God with contempt and ingratitude. The Holy Eucharist is the great act of God's condescension. Yea, there is no act by which He hath so proved His love to us as that in

which, on the night before He suffered He took bread into His holy and undefiled hands, and broke it, and said, "Take and eat; this is my body," thereby leaving Himself the sacrifice and victim for the salvation of His people for ever. There is no condescension that can be compared to this; not even the humiliation of the cross was greater than the humiliation of the Divine Eucharist. To be in the hands and at the will of His priests, whether they are pure or not; to put himself completely a prisoner in our tabernacles, at our mercy; this is abasement indeed. We can approach him with love, or we can treat Him with indifference. We can deny His divine presence, and fail to bow the knee before Him. We can come into His temples, where the Angels of God never cease to send up their song of praise; and no thought of gratitude or of ado-

ration can warm our hearts. We may feel no hushing of our souls in the silence of His presence; no desire to hold communion with Him. And night after night, in the stillness of His Sacramental Throne, when there are no human words expressed before Him, and no human hearts, perhaps, to offer Him their tribute of praise, still, patient and loving and gentle, according to His divine word, here He abides. We can take Him through the lanes and the streets of the city; we can bear Him in our bosoms to the sinful and the suffering, through the open thoroughfares where men reject Him and follow iniquity. We can even give Him to souls that love Him not. He will not refuse to come where we bear Him. Mighty God, furnace of love! He will enter even into the cold and ruined heart; He will go to those whose souls are

not weaned from vice, to those who do not desire to sacrifice themselves to Him. And, alas! He will go, if we bear Him thither, to souls that are defiled by mortal sin, where the sacrilege of the Cross shall be renewed, and where He shall be made to suffer untold agonies. "I have," said He to the Blessed Margaret Mary, "been dragged this day, bound with thorns and with chains, through dry and hard places, and I have been dragged by a soul that loved Me. I have been pained and grieved, until My heart is almost broken, by the infidelity of one who professed to be mine. In that heart which was mine by every tie the creature has entered, and I am forgotten." "There are souls," said He again, "who come to Me often to receive Me in the banquet of love, and they are so unloving and so cold to Me that, whenever I give myself to them in Holy Commu-

nion, I suffer untold agony. Oh! go and tell them this; pray for them; ask them to learn the devotion to my Sacred Heart, for ere long it will be too late." Oh! that we could hear the voice of the Son of God speaking in our temples when He giveth Himself in Holy Communion to His children, when He says to us, "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death!" Are there some of you here who love me supremely, who can stay and watch with me? Why will you expose me, day after day, to this sadness and this woe? Consider that whenever you touch the Divine Eucharist, you touch the fountain of life; consider that you receive the body, and soul, and Divinity of the Eternal King; consider that I am here only for love of you; I am here, stretching out my hands, as on my cross, all day long to a disobedient and gain-saying people. I am here, that I may

lead you to a glorified life; I am here, the bread of angels, that I may quicken you, and raise you from your sins, and bring you to my heavenly home." Oh! contrast the Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord in these tabernacles with the human hearts before them; contrast them at the moment of the Holy Communion; contrast them now. There, while I speak, is the Sacred Heart burning with fire for you, and anxious to throw out its flood of divine tenderness to encompass you and bring you back to the paths of life and light, and make you wholly His. How do human hearts respond; hearts that are filled with the world, hearts that are only half given to God, hearts that still love the creature, and bow down before the idols of the flesh?

II.

How, then, when thus we behold the anguish of the soul of our Blessed Lord, can we make reparation to Him for His so great sorrow?

I. First of all, we can *feel* for Him, and we can ask Almighty God to give us the power to feel. Is it not a mystery that we are so unloving, that we can seek everything else but him? Is it not a mystery that we can love those who attract us on earth; that we can see earthly beauty, and revere it; that we are drawn by affections here, and even place our rest in worldly ties, and yet we have no hearts to give to God, our Redeemer? And He is the most lovely of all things; the One who hath sympathy for us far beyond all earthly knowledge; the One who came to this world

to bleed and die for us; the only One who can lift us up from our miseries, and grant us rest in life, peace in death, and joy in eternity. Oh! when we consider His countless mercies to us, is it not a mystery surpassing all mysteries that we cannot feel for Him? Let us pray to Him, then, that He will touch our hearts with a coal from His own Divine Altar, and lighten up that heavenly flame within us, that we may feel for our rejected Lord; feel for His cause on earth when men deny Him and cast Him out; feel for Him, and Him alone, when the kings of the earth stand up, and the nations meet together against the Lord and against the Christ; feel for Him when armies press upon the Church of God; when priests and nuns are exiled for love of Him; feel for Him when His cause declines, and the shout of victory rises loud and high in the

camp of the enemy; feel for Him when the bright mirror of baptismal innocence is shattered before us; when the lilies of His garden droop and die; when souls dedicated to Him by every tie turn from Him, and go down in the darkness of death. Oh! was there ever sorrow like His? May He not say to us, "Oh! all ye that pass by, come and see if there was ever woe like mine"? And can we not respond to Him, "Oh! that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for my sins and the sins of my people"? Thus, when our hearts have been made to feel, our tears shall run down with His, our affections shall be His, and the tribute of our sympathy will ascend, a grateful incense, to the trembling and broken Heart of Jesus Christ.

2. Then, it is in our power to give

our hearts wholly to Him, and thus make reparation for all our offences, and even for those of others. And when I speak of my heart, I know full well how unworthy it is to be offered to the immaculate purity of God; a heart that has touched, perhaps, the very blackness of sin; a heart that has been stained with so many iniquities, bound and fettered, and led captive by vice. What is that heart, that I should dare to offer it to the most loving Son of God? O my dear brethren! God in His mercy hath opened from that Sacred Side the fountain of water and of blood; and if I will go and wash, and there cleanse myself from my leprosy, it is all He asks me to do, that I may give Him my heart. He wants not my honors nor my earthly treasure. He was born in the stable of Bethlehem, and crucified on the cross, and He despiseth the gifts of the world.

He desires only my love. It is in my power to give Him my heart purified and set free. The stains that I have brought upon my baptismal innocence I can wash away; the idols that I have set up, I can break them down; the chains wherewith I have bound myself by my vices and my evil habits, I can shatter those shackles to pieces; and when my heart is free and pure, I can give it to my God. And here is the only way that I can keep myself pure; while, like Magdalen, I will kneel and weep, and bathe His precious feet with my tears, and pour upon them the spikenard of my self-denial. His tears will then fall down, and they will wash my soul; His precious blood will gush upon my vileness, and make me clean, and He will accept the offering of my affection.

3. Then I have it in my power to *suffer* for

Him and with Him, and this suffering He will graciously receive. It shall be united to His great agony. It shall go up, not only with consolation to his broken Heart, but even with merit before Him. I, too, have a capacity for pain; I can suffer in my body, and I can suffer in my soul; I can feel ingratitude; I know what it is to labor in vain; I know what it is to have those for whom I have done the most, turn against me; I know what it is to bear sorrow and disappointment; and I can offer this capacity of pain, which is my way of purification, in union with the infinite sufferings of the Son of God. And while I suffer, and when my heart shall bleed, the Most Precious Heart of my Lord will accept the offering that I make; He will gather up the tears of my gratitude, and He will sanctify my pain. I can offer to Him the sufferings of my body, the scourges of sickness, which I

have to bear. Every pain and every woe which have been, or are to be, my lot in this my pilgrimage, I can unite them gratefully to the sorrows of my Lord. When the grave opens before me, and the icy hand of death is upon me, then the cold horrors of that last hour I can offer to Him who died for me. The tears that gush unbidden, and which I cannot restrain when I bear to the tomb the forms of those I love, and bid them farewell for ever from the scenes of earth; those tears can I offer to Him who wept over the grave of Lazarus, and they shall be accepted. I can follow, according to His blessed inspiration, in the way of the saints of God, and I can, with scourge and with penance, press down my animal nature, and make it pay a tribute of pain to the mighty Lord who died for it. Yea, according to His Divine Will can I offer to Him my self-denials, my sorrows, and my pen-

ances. They are the expression of my love; they are the prayer for more perfect cleansing; they are the desire to be more perfectly united with the suffering Lord. And the agony of my soul, the ingratitude which I bear, disappointments in my weary journey; my faults; the experience of my own weakness; the overwhelming sense of my nothingness when God pours upon me His celestial light, and lets me see what I am in His sight: all this pain can I offer to the suffering soul of Christ; for then the shades of the garden are around me, and my tears may be united with His. "God forbid," said the Apostle, "that I should glory save in the cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Behold, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. To me, to die is gain. He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." These are the triumph-

ant expressions of the saints of God, of those who, in the might of His grace, have wrought righteousness, have become unworldly, and have turned their face for ever from the things that are seen to the things that are unseen and eternal. So will I learn in my reparation to love the darkness of Gethsemani and the olive shades that hide all but my Redeemer from me. So will I love to go down there where all is dark and drear, that I may fly the contact of this sinful world, and I shall learn to be buried in the cold and quiet tomb in which my Redeemer was laid; blessed and safe retreat, where my soul shall die to things of earth, that it may live only for God.

### III.

How, then, lastly, dearly beloved brethren, doth our devotion to the Sacred Heart of

Jesus Christ lead us in the work of reparation?

1. From that Sacred Side cometh the power thus to offer to God our hearts and our sufferings. From the Sacred Heart cometh the life in which we live, and we can only make reparation by uniting our works to His until our souls live and move alone in Him. Here love speaketh by deeds, and not by words. Here truth and loyalty are tried. It is not the morning of the resurrection, it is not the triumph when the Lord rides into His kingdom with a procession of palms. It is the dark garden of Gethsemani, and here are the shadows of His Cross. Here love will be tested and proved. No mere professions will last in this darkness. Here abideth truth alone. Who will persevere; who will go down to the depth that is involved in this great work of reparation to the agonizing Redeemer; who will bear the

morning's rising, and the noonday heat, and the sun's decline, and the darkness of the night; who will stand watching, the weary day and the long night; watching patiently and for ever, unless his heart be united to the Sacred Heart of the Son of God, and the flame of eternal love be burning bright within him? Thus to our weariness cometh the fountain, ever to refresh us, from the Sacred Side. Thus we drink of the sweet waters of life, and thus God feeds and nourishes us, and gives us the strength to offer to Him our souls, and our bodies, and all that we have. Then, day by day, as we advance in that interior life where God will lead us, must we lean upon that Sacred Heart, and learn its treasures of wisdom, and grace, and purity. He who hath inspired in us the Christian life must lead us to its glorious consummation; and so, day by day, will our Blessed Master guide us, bringing us nearer and nearer, as we

can bear it, to His sacred presence; teaching us all the secrets of His interior life, giving us new power to behold the things of earth as they are, and greater strength to lift our hearts to the Blessed Face of Christ, which shall become ever present to us. Then shall we learn the meaning of that language of St. Paul, wherein he says: "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then shall we understand that sadness which is not forbidding, nor uncheerful, nor inaccessible to human joy, which ever reigned over the humanity of the Son of God, because it came from the depths of His infinite tenderness and His knowledge of all man's sorrows and needs. Yea, we shall be "always sorrowful, yet ever rejoicing"; always sorrowful, for have we not to bear the burden of our own sins; do we not feel, day by day, more and more our countless ingritudes? And because He hath forgiven us for all our sins against

Him, can we ever be willing to forgive ourselves? Have we not to bear, day by day, a burden which seemeth to grow greater and greater; the unequalled burden of our unworthiness of the Lord we love? And have we not also to bear the burden of the sins of others, those to whom we minister, those whose wants God in His mercy hath opened to our care? Yes, beloved brethren, it is not in the heart united with the Sacred Heart of the Son of God to give itself to earthly joys. It may be lighted up with a smile, it may rejoice, it may take the innocent pleasures of earth; but after all it is not of this world. Its peace and its joy are hidden far away in the secret of the Divine Humanity. It liveth in Christ, and all its joy is hidden in him.

2. Then the devotion of which we speak is in itself an act of reparation most mighty, and most consoling, and most affecting to the broken heart of Jesus

Christ. Yea, when thus we come, with our poor human hearts, to offer them to Him who died for us, and to pour the current of our poor, imperfect love into the mighty ocean of his infinite tenderness, then it is that we offer to Him all the reparation of which we are capable. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is the most intense adoration of the humanity of the Son of God. By it we bring our sinful bodies and our wayward souls into direct contact with God made man. By it our hands touch His, and our feet touch His, and our eyes touch His, and our hearts are united with His. By this devotion the love of God incarnate comes before us day by day with more and more power, as the ruling guide of our souls; and in the sight of that infinite glory, all human love dies and passes away. The lights of earth become dim and go out for ever before the burning

light of the mercy of Christ, and our hearts, made pure through His most precious blood, have strength to offer Him, day by day, new tears for sins past, new aspirations, new tributes of gratitude. So, from His eternal throne, He who suffered for us in the agony of the Garden, and trembled beneath the burden of our sins, will take us to His blessed embrace when we have learned to love Him alone, and to cast ourselves for ever upon His Sacred Side.

Then, dearly beloved brethren, in these days, when there are so few to serve the Lord who bought them; in these days, when there are so many ungrateful souls, let us hear the language of our Lord, and watch with Him. Let us never leave our Redeemer alone. Let us go down to the Garden of Olives, and fear not its darkness and its gloom. Let us pray that there may be no Judas there to be-

tray the Son of God with a kiss. Let us neither fear nor tremble. "Blessed Redeemer, I give Thee my heart. I will watch with Thee. Strengthen me in my vigil, and let my remaining days be spent before Thee. I will watch with Thee, and I will work with Thee, and I will pray with Thee and for Thine until the morning shall dawn, and Thou shalt call me Thy beloved, and teach my heart its canticle of Joy." I will go to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense. The voice of my beloved crieth to me, "The winter is over and gone, the flowers begin to appear in our land. There are the signs of spring. Come, my beloved, and be crowned. Come, my spouse, come from the mountains of the desert, and from the dens of the lions. Go forth, ye daughters of Jerusalem, and behold the King in the diadem wherewith His mother crowned Him in the day of

His espousals, and in the day of the joy of His heart." Then shall be the blessed nuptials, then the voices of the Bridegroom and the Bride shall be heard; then celestial music shall sound upon my ravished ears, and the Sacred Heart shall gather to itself all that is pure and lovely of earth, and give it rest in its everlasting embrace.

## LECTURE FOURTH.

### *THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART IN THE PRESENT DAY.*

“Because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold; but he that shall persevere to the end shall be saved.”—ST. MATT. xxiv. 12, 13.



HAVING seen, my dear brethren, the nature of the devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, its blessed fruits, and its power of reparation to the offended majesty of God, we are able to-night to understand its importance in the present age. Our Lord Himself has predicted not only the enmity of the world, but even the treachery of His own disciples. “Behold, I send you forth,” He says, “as lambs among wolves. They shall persecute you from city to city; they shall cast out your name as evil. If

the world hath despised me, much more shall it despise you. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of His household?" And history has verified these predictions; for, from the day of the incarnation of Christ, there has scarcely been one hour when the world, either directly or indirectly, by violence or by indifference, has not sought to attack the religion which He brought to mankind. On all sides the Church has felt the power of persecution; now by fire or sword, now by the malice of the tongue. There has been, and there will be to the end, a bitter enmity between the world which He came to redeem and the Incarnate Word. Yet this is not all. He predicted, also, the treachery of His own disciples. He foretold that out of the very elect should come those who should turn against Him, and seek to divide His

camp, and rend his seamless garment. These were to be His worst enemies. "Faithful are the wounds of an enemy, but the kisses of a friend are deceitful." And so in the visions of the prophet, when Our Lord showed the wounds in His hands and side, and the prophet asked, "Whence are these wounds in Thy Hands"? He answered, "These are wounds that I received in the house of them that loved me." "It was not," said He, "an open enemy that did me this dishonor, for then I could have borne it; but it was thou, my guide, my counsellor, and my familiar friend." Even as one of the twelve who followed Him in the days of His ministry turned traitor to Him, and sold Him to the Jews for thirty pieces of silver, so there have arisen in the Church ever since, those who should betray the Lord who bought them, and become the source of grief to His afflicted Heart. In

these latter days Our Lord has revealed to His servant that He has wished to renew the flame of Divine charity in cold and unloving souls by means of devotion to His Sacred Heart. He came on earth incarnate, in great humility, living a life of sorrow on earth, and died on the cross, shedding His blood for the sins of man. For nineteen centuries of unexhausted love hath He been with us in the adorable Eucharist. Now, in the end of the world, as the latter day approaches, and the signs of the coming of the Son of Man to judgment multiply on every side, doth He seek to come with a new revelation of grace, to win us by the display of His great mercy. Now doth He stand before the world, and open His Sacred Side, make bare His broken Heart, and bid man to look and see the love that brought the Son of the Highest from heaven to the misery and lowliness of earth.

The importance, then, of this devotion, revealed by Jesus Christ in the present age, will appear if we briefly view the evils of our own day, and the manner in which this great remedy, proposed by Divine mercy, shall overcome them.

## I.

Among the evils of our day, which I will briefly set before you to-night, may be counted the decline of faith, the opposition of modern society against religion, and the decay of love in the Church, and among men.

1. That there are in the world a decline of faith and a blindness towards the things of God needs hardly any argument. Beyond the pale of the Catholic Church, faith is spoken of, but is not understood. Heresies of the earlier day attacked here and there single verities

of the faith. The heresies of the latter day seek to overthrow the very pillar and ground of truth, and attack, not simply the verities of faith, but the Church of God, which supports them all. They seek to turn men from that living and infallible voice which ever on earth was an oracle to speak the word of God to man and guide him in the way of truth. Among those, therefore, who deny the Catholic Church and her mission among men there cannot be found faith; for without an infallible teacher there is no hearing of the voice of God. God cannot speak, except through a living and unerring organ; and so that which to many appears to be faith is only opinion more or less strong. It may come from the associations of childhood; it may come from things that are sacred, which have been taught us by our fathers; it may come from even the consent of the world

around us. It is ever changing and ever fluctuating. It cannot be that faith which simply hears and believes the word of God. Faith rests entirely on His promises and His veracity; and hence beyond the pale of the Catholic Church there is found not even a semblance of unity. When Protestant Christians shall come together to profess before the world a species of unity, and to exchange their sympathies one with another, it must be understood in advance that they shall leave behind them all questions of creed, and that they shall unite, therefore, in a simple expression of piety. But a piety which is not built on dogma is something incomprehensible to the reason. The consequences of these divisions which have prevailed in the last three centuries are very serious. Infidelity, such as we have not known for many generations, is rife among us. It is not an uncommon

thing now to hear men deny the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour, while they profess His name and call themselves Christians. It is not an uncommon thing for men to confess that He died on the cross of Calvary, and yet to assert that that death had no atoning power; that man did not need that sacrifice which was thus so prodigally offered to the justice of God. The sacraments of the Church, which are the fountains through which floweth the precious blood to heal the maladies of men, are denied; or, if retained, their sanctifying power is rejected. All this unbelief comes from the denial of the Church of Christ, which is His spouse, and the sacrament of unity to a living Redeemer. From the rejection of the Church comes the denial of every sacrament or exterior rite; and from this refusal to accept the supernatural, so common in our own day, men have come even

to deny the verities of natural religion. Truths that were found out by pagans in days bygone, before the advent of Christianity, are now called in question. A belief in God is not received by modern philosophers. If they believe in Him at all, they place Him far away from earth, allowing the world to roll on either by chance or by fixed laws. They altogether deny His providence and His government of the intelligent creation. Then the retribution that follows this life, which even reason conjectures, is disbelieved when the revelations of heaven and hell are scouted as nursery tales, unfit for men of intelligence to receive. Thus the dictates of natural religion pass away and are forgotten, and men meet together who call themselves philosophers and advanced thinkers, to deny the immortality of the soul; to assert, in fine, that man is a beast, a mere animal, whose soul dieth

with his body. This lamentable infidelity is really a return to paganism and the darkness that covered the earth before the advent of Christ. But as it is a rejection of the Son of God and His glorious Gospel, it is a darkness more dense; it is a gloom more impenetrable even than that which hung over the lands bowed down with pagan idolatry. Within the Church of God faith can never die. God liveth within her, and He will always have a remnant for his praise. Yet it is possible for the light of faith to grow dim and die out in hearts that are clouded by sin, in consciences that are uncleansed by contrition, in intelligences which, having rejected the graces of the Gospel, have been poisoned by the atmosphere of the world, which surrounds us on every side. Thus Catholics even can become dead to the voice of faith, unloving and unliving, in a day when man denies his Re-

deemer. There are Catholics whose hearts do not respond to the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff; who do not receive with docility and submission the words that fall from his infallible mouth. There are those who are not obedient to their own pastors; who take for themselves the liberty of questioning, and even doubting, the truths that are delivered to them from the sanctuary. They will have their opinions; they are not to be bound down by blind obedience to their teachers. They have imbibed the spirit of the day. They would seek to compromise, if it were possible, the unchangeable Gospel and the inflexible law of Christ, to accommodate it to the pressure of the day. They are not willing to confess the Lord before men. They would hide their talent in a napkin. The glorious faith that God has given to them, a gift more precious than all the treasures of the

earth; they would bury in the ground, waiting until the Master shall come to demand His own with interest. "Liberal Catholics," says the immortal Pius IX., "are the pest of the Church and traitors to the truth." Liberal Catholics are they who would seek to accommodate the verities which God has revealed to the tastes and dispositions of the age; who are willing to hide what God has spoken, as if it were possible thus to be liberal in keeping from man the glorious gift of truth, and leaving him in the darkness of his sins, where the bright rays of the Sun of righteousness that shine in the temple of Emmanuel cannot reach him.

2. The opposition of modern society to religion is an evil which flows, perhaps, from this decline in faith. It is, however, an evidence that the world is marshalling its forces for a last battle with

God and His Christ. The social order, as you know full well, has its foundation in the law of God. "There is no power but that which is ordained of God." And when kings and rulers reign, they rule and reign by Divine authority; and he that obeyeth them obeyeth the ordinance of God. Modern society, while it denies the very foundation on which the social order rests, asserts its independence even of God, and claims that the people are the fountain of its authority. The right of revolution so generally held, asserts that the majority may, without any just cause, change their form of government and dethrone their rulers, no matter how legitimately they may be established. Thus the age has arrayed itself for an attack against the Lord most mighty and the religion which is the very foundation of all social happiness. Christian society owes its existence to the Church of God.

Men were emancipated from the blindness of heathen darkness by the light of the Gospel. Woman was raised from her servitude to her equal and glorious position with man, by the light that shone upon her from Bethlehem and the home of the pure and spotless Virgin. Society arose in its strength and its magnificence from the creating hand of the living Church; and the law of morals, revealed by God and taught by His Church, is not only the foundation of the social order, but also its security against error and decay. The nation and the kingdom that will serve God shall stand; the nation and the kingdom that resisteth God shall perish; for saith the Holy Ghost, "No weapon that is formed against Thee shall prosper." And yet what do we behold in this age but the attempt to go back to the days preceding Christianity, and divorce, if it were possible, society from religion. They

tell us that faith has nothing to do with the social fabric, which rests on its own basis. They say, "Let religion keep to its own cloister; let kings and rulers govern according to their interests or ambition. We will restrain the Church and shackle her; we will imprison her, if necessary, if she interfere with the exercise of our prerogatives." Dearly beloved brethren, do not the same morals exist for the individual as for nations? Is man, as an individual, to be governed by one law, and, as a member of society, to be governed by another? Religion must of necessity be the teacher of those principles which are the foundations of right, and which must govern society. There have been times, since our Divine Lord came into this world, when nations have rejoiced to lay their crowns at the feet of His Vicar, not thus to resign their temporal sovereignty, but by that expressive ceremony

to confess that the supernatural is above the natural; that the religion of God, revealed to man through the miracles of His Son, is above the temporal order which governs our earthly life, and that the highest and truest happiness of man is found in obedience to that faith which God has made known. What do we behold in our own day? The most inconsistent theories of government abound on every side. At one moment they will assert a principle which in the next they are ready to contradict. They will tell you that the social order depends on the will of the people for its authority, and, on the other hand, pretend that it has jurisdiction over the supernatural, and may rule and govern the ecclesiastical order. They assert even that kings are independent of the authority of the Church, that nations collectively are vested with power to control the Bride and Spouse

of Christ, and that cabinets have a right to exercise a supremacy over the conscience. On every side there is a jealousy of the Church. She goeth on her peaceful way, she doth not wound nor injure any one, she hath no artillery of death nor flaming steel before her; yet she liveth, and her immortality is that which the world feareth. No pressure can conquer her, no force can crush out her invincible life. You may drive her from city to city, and she will spring up again. You may mow down her children as the grass of the field, and fructify the earth with their blood; they will arise again, and from the blood of martyrs shall come forth even more to glorify the Lord and King of martyrs. And this is that before which the world trembles, of which it is jealous; and although the lessons of history are ever before us, men will never learn. The infidelity of the

cabinets of modern states is something surpassing even comprehension. There are very few nations where the authority of God in the supernatural is really recognized. There are many states where cabinet ministers are plotting continually against the Church of God. It seems to be their great ambition, not to strengthen their own domain, not to build up its commerce and its resources, but to guard against the encroaches of the kingdom of Christ, to break down her spiritual power, to prevent obedience to her priests, to steal away her children, and pervert them, if possible, to the infidelity of the day. "What," said a cabinet minister in the land of the Madonna—"what to me is God, whom they now threaten me with? What is God to me? If there be a God, how do I know that He taketh interest in the affairs of the earth? And if He doth, it is not to Him that I

have to account; it is to the public opinion of Europe, before which I stand." This open avowal of the infidelity of the cabinet of Italy is, after all, only the expression of the spirit of modern society. Dear brethren, we have come to behold with unmoved eyes and unshaken gaze the violation of confessed and inalienable rights. The right of conscience; the right to serve God when no human law is broken; these rights are trampled upon. In Europe now, and in more than one state, priests are driven from the altar for no other reason whatever than their fidelity to the religion of Christ. They have been on the battle-field; they have gone after the dying and the wounded, wherever the victorious eagles of their country have led them. They have bared their breasts to the foe. They for their loyalty and patriotism receive no thanks; they are to be driven from their altars

and their homes, and their property stolen from them, because they are the priests and the ministers of a power so mighty that the cabinets of the earth fear them. Religious, poor defenceless women, who have come to consecrate their bodies and their souls to their great Redeemer, are exiled from homes that have been given them by the charity of ages past, without scarcely the clothing to cover them. They are driven like sheep from their native land. The shrines of the Saints are broken down. Altars built by the munificence of the faithful and the charity of generation upon generation are crushed to pieces. Temples that stand over the relics of martyrs are turned to be the stables of a robber-king. There is no sacredness to be respected; there is no fear of God or of man. There are no rights to be regarded where might is right and brute-power prevails. And the

worst of all is, that the mind of this century is so perverted, that there are none to rise up in the seat of power and protest against the violation of justice, and this trampling upon that which man holds most dear. Not one nation in Europe, scarcely a nation on the face of the earth, hath protested in this day against the violation of the territory of the Supreme Pontiff. And yet it is a spoliation unparalleled in history. A nation enters upon the peaceable domain of another without a single pretext except the lust of power, without one single reason to plead before the received law of nations; and, after entering, it robs with an unsparing hand, and deals devastation right and left without regard to God or man. The same atrocity and forgetfulness of God have prevailed in other lands.

One of the great artifices of our infidel modern society, by which it would divorce

religion from the social order, is to take up education as a matter of civil competence and to make it an instrument by which to pervert the tender hearts of children, and to lead them from the faith. They tell you that education belongs to society, that it is the duty of the state to educate her children; thereby trampling not only upon the rights of the Church, but upon the rights of the parents to whom God has committed these children. And for what end is society so earnest in this day for the education of the young? Is it that they may know the truths of science; is it that they may be elevated in the natural order? Alas! there are many who engage in the movement who understand not its inspiration. It is that it may tear children from their religion; that it may separate in their tender years the teaching of the supernatural from the knowledge of natural sciences, and thereby raise up a generation

of infidels. The pastors of the Church, in union with the Holy Father, have lifted up their hands, have begged the Catholic people to know and understand that there is no attack more insidious nor more dangerous than that by which modern society would seek through education to pervert the faith of their offspring. Yes, and the worst of all, and the saddest blow to the suffering heart of the Redeemer, is that there are Catholics who will not listen to the voice of the Holy Father, or the expostulations of their Pastors; that there are those who will venture to act for themselves, and follow the poisonous leading of the age. They will reply, with the reasoning of the modern infidel, that there is no necessity to unite ordinary instruction with religion: "Let us have our religion in one place, and our education in another." It is, indeed, only one of those evidences by which it appears that the present century

is marshalling its hosts for a last attack against the Incarnate God; for, when our children shall have forgotten our faith, who shall rise up to man the bulwarks of Zion; who will stand, with the strong arm and the ready hand, to fight the battles of the Lord of Hosts?

3. We have, however, not only to look at the decline of faith and the opposition to God beyond the boundaries of our Zion, but we have to behold the decay of love within the Church and among men. This will plainly appear by several important marks, which are far too evident to be contradicted.

There is wanting now among us a strong personal love to Jesus Christ our Lord. This, dear brethren, is a most serious want, which will take from virtue its vigor, and from purity its power. God is the infinite beauty; all that is attractive is in Him. He hath become incarnate, that he might

express, in an image to be seen by our eyes, His own glory. His majesty, his loveliness, His infinite attributes, are shown to us in the body and soul of His Incarnate Son; and when that Incarnate Son took a human heart, He filled it with His own infinite tenderness. As the human heart yearneth for love, and seeketh for an object on which it may rest, so doth the human heart of the Son of God yearn for our love. God we have not seen, but the uncreated beauty hath been expressed to us in the features and face of the Word made flesh. He hath been on earth, He hath gone up to the glory of His Father, and yet, by the power of His spirit, is He ever with us, and in the Divine Eucharist, where, in great lowliness, he veils His glory, does He feed and guide His flock. Coming to us with the tenderness of the mother and the gentleness of the father in this adorable sacrament, He rules and reigns over us; and

for all His condescension, He only asks our love. How few there are who turn to Him and give Him all their affection; how few who realize in their souls a strong personal affection for Jesus Christ, a longing for His presence, and a zeal for His glory, who seek to be ever with Him and near Him! "Oh! how lovely are Thy tabernacles," said the Psalmist, "Thou Lord of Hosts, my King and my God! My soul hath desired to dwell for ever in Thy temple, there to behold Thy beauty. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I can desire in comparison with Thee. All earthly beauty fades away before me; flesh and heart faileth, but Thou, my God, art my rest and my portion for ever." How few are there in this unloving day who thus seek the Lord of Hosts, and give Him all the tenderness of their souls!

Then there is a want of loyalty to the Church of God, the Bride and Spouse of

Christ, which He hath redeemed by His most precious blood, and in which He dwells. The Church is militant and suffering now. Her battles are not over, her conquests are not gained. There is a pressure from the enemies upon her lines in every place. The world rides in upon her bulwarks. Here and there her candlesticks go out upon her walls. Here and there the enemy gain an advantage. She shall be militant until the end, when she shall win her last victory. That loyalty to her which springs from love to Christ, is the identification of our interests with hers, a constant zeal for her honor, a desire that God's kingdom may be known and loved, an obedience to the voice of her Pastors, and a childlike and humble submission to all their commands. This loyalty makes us true men, and lifts our hearts from the things that are seen to the things that are invisible, from the

changing interests of time to the great realities of eternity.

Then worldliness, as a canker and a moth devouring a garment, sadly prevails even among those who seem to be devout Catholics. How few can you find that are emancipated from this pest, this worship of the world, which the apostle calls idolatry? The great majority of men are seeking for gold. Whether they have much or little of their idol, they bow down before it. It is the end of their life to build up this golden column of their ambition. For it they waste away their days and their nights, grow old prematurely, break down the vigor of their health, and go to their graves in an early age, where they can take nothing of that wealth with them. They rush for honor and for place, labor for the laurels that fade ere they can place them upon their brows, and care not for the golden and imperish-

able wreaths of the just. To be known among men, to be honored, to lay up wealth: these are the ends for which so many live, and only waste that life which God gave them, that they might acquire eternal treasures. Catholics, with the light of faith before them, are often so poisoned by this worldliness, that the very vigor of their faith dies out, and they are afraid to confess Christ before men. If this confession stands in the way of their worldly interests, they will even conceal that they are Catholics. They are ready to compromise with the world, because it is their master, to which they give their service. But God hath said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

You will find, also, as a further evidence of the decay of love in these evil days, a want of zeal for the conversion of sinners to Christ. Who are they that realize the value of the immortal soul;

who are they that look upon the wanderer as he goes away from the Lord of life to the ways of unending death and darkness, and weep for the loss of that life that God gave, which was meant to spend its strength in the golden streets of the celestial city? How few there are that even think that the sins of others are matter of grief for them! There are so few who sorrow for their own sins that there are scarcely any who can weep for the sins of others. And, oh! how few there are who go with tenderness, following the example of our Blessed Lord, to seek the wandering and the ruined, and to bring them back from the briers of the desert to the safe fold of life and salvation! Few are there that realize that the agony of the soul of Christ is concerned in the loss of these immortal souls; and that the ministry of reconciliation hath been put in our hands; that God

would make us even flaming fires, to extend the light of His grace to the benighted and to the wretched. The cause of Christ languishes for lack of those who shall go forth with the power of the Sacred Heart and the tenderness of the Man-God, to spend their strength with His members, and to bring the desolate to the good Samaritan, who can refresh the weary and the lost with the oil and consolation of Divine mercy.

If we look well into our own hearts, we shall be forced to confess that our standard of holiness is low indeed. Many have no higher aim than to free their souls from mortal sin. The very highest which they propose as the end of their labors is at last to save their souls. They do not even reflect that they have a debt of gratitude to pay to the mercy of Christ; that every sin that they commit writes its character upon their moral nature, and leaves its

debt to the justice of God. They do not even remember that they cannot sin without touching the relation that subsists between them and their Master, and weakening the love that binds them to Him. There are many Catholics who scarcely ever draw near the sacrament of Divine love, who feel no emotion towards it, and no thirst nor hunger for the food of everlasting life, no aspirations to be united with their Eucharistic Lord, so lovingly abiding here for our consolation. Rarely, if ever, are they to be seen before His tabernacle. Rarely, if ever, do they send up the tribute of a true praise and an earnest gratitude; or, if they receive the sacraments, they receive them with cold and unloving hearts. They are not drawing nearer to their Lord; their minds are occupied with other things, and with worldly business. "Where their treasure is, there is their heart"; and the

Lord is not their treasure. How few are there who grieve over their slightest faults, who have made up their minds that they will serve the Lord who bought them in perfect purity, and who in earnestness are endeavoring to build up on the ruins of their sins the edifice of a true sanctity that shall stand in the day of judgment! The Catholic Church ever bringeth forth saints to God, and here and there, from her Divine fountains, spring torrents of life and of love; but yet how cold and indifferent are many to the great graces of Christ! Where are the chosen souls who have found that there is no lover for them but the God who became man? Where are the elect that are willing to consecrate themselves in soul and body to the service of a crucified Spouse? How few Catholic parents are willing to give up their children, that they may be the handmaidens of the Lord

of Hosts and the spouses of His temple? Rather do they seek for some worldly marriage or some earthly position. It may, indeed, separate them for life, but they are willing to make this sacrifice for a worldly gain. The Lord has no claims upon them. There are few indeed in this age that are running from the seductions of the world, and, like the Spouse in the Canticles, yearn for Jesus Christ. "I on my bed at night seek for my Beloved, that I may hear His voice, and, when I find Him not, I run through the streets and lanes of the city. Tell me, said I to the watchmen, where is my Beloved; and when at last I found Him, I held Him fast, and would not let Him go." "I will hold Thee until Thou shalt bring me unto the home of my mother, where Thou shalt teach me." It was the Blessed Virgin herself who taught us the glory of virginity, and of consecration of

soul and body to Christ. Virginity, and confessorship, and the religious state are the glories of the Church; for they are the manifestations of a hidden life, and the desire for holiness, which nothing but the Heart of God can fill. What a contrast between the burning, jealous Heart of the Son of God, yearning for souls, that He may take them all to Himself, and our wayward hearts, so indifferent, so cold, and so unloving! "Thou hast wounded me," said He, "my sister, my spouse; thou hast wounded me with one of thine eyes and with one of the hairs of thy neck." "The slightest imperfection in thee has gone to my Heart; the slightest infidelity has added to the grief of my soul; for I am a jealous Lover, and that which I desire, I desire to be wholly mine."

II.

What, then, dearly beloved, is the remedy which the Incarnate God has proposed for the evils of our day, its want of faith, its opposition to God, and its decay of true love and piety? What can the Lord do that He hath not done? We look back to the days of His incarnation, when pagan darkness covered the earth. "Thick darkness," says the prophet, "rested upon the people." Then came the brightness of the orient from on high, that should arise with supernal light to illumine the earth, when the people that walked in darkness should behold a great light, and upon them who were sitting in the shadow of death the dawn should arise. The day came when the wilderness and the solitary places rejoiced, and the desert blossomed as the rose. We remember well the scene of Bethlehem, when the Son of the High-

est came unto this earth a little child, in great humility; when, born of the Spotless Virgin, He broke the spell of night, and the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world was seen. Then the sound of angelic armies was heard, and the shepherds feeding their flocks by night came to His stable to adore Him, and the wise men from the East brought Him, in the name of the nations, their gold, their frankincense, and their myrrh. Can He become incarnate again? When pagan darkness returns, shall the Orient from on High dawn once more? We remember, too, the shadows of Calvary, when that same Child of Bethlehem, grown to the stature of manhood and to all its beauty, allowed Himself to be lifted upon the cross, and died in agony, pouring out every drop of His precious blood, and becoming for man's sake as the vilest of criminals. Can the Lord of

life die again? Year after year, since that day, hath He been on earth in the Divine Eucharist, where so patiently and so forbearingly hath He watched the desolations of Israel. The sins of His own people, the ingratitude of His chosen, the opposition and malice of His enemies, have all passed before Him. Tears have run down His face by day and by night. "I weep," He says, "and my eyes run down with grief for the destruction of the Daughter of my people. Her altars are thrown down, her temple is in the dust, her glorious beauty is trampled upon. The nations become spoilers of my treasures. From on High the Lord hath poured upon the Daughter of Zion the vials of His wrath. O all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be sorrow like unto my sorrow. O Virgin Daughter of Zion! to whom shall I compare thee? for vast as the sea is thy destruction; who shall heal

thee?" Is there a remedy that Divine love can propose before the final day of judgment, before the trumpet of the archangel shall sound, and the dead shall arise, and trembling man be gathered up to give an account to the Judge of the quick and dead? Before that dread hour of justice, He hath one more appeal to make. He cometh in mercy. He standeth before His people. He openeth His Sacred Side. He maketh bare His broken Heart. Look up, kings and people, "behold the Man." Here I stand, the crown of thorns upon my head, the nails in my hands and feet. My Heart is open and bleeding for you. Look into its recesses. Behold the infinite love of God. Perhaps, before the day of final account, this love may move you to return to me; it may win your affections to my service.

So shall the devotion to the Sacred Heart reawaken faith. It shall even touch the

infidel world. The light of grace, the Divine love within it, shall flow out to the nations in the darkness of paganism, to bring them back, by the zeal of apostolic missionaries, to the fold of salvation. The broken ranks of divided Christianity may yet be gathered together by love.

The Sacred Heart shall move men back to the truth. "Why stand ye all the day away from my altars, from the home of faith? Why stand ye, who profess to seek me, away from my sister and my spouse? Why are ye in the ranks of my enemy? Come to the sacramental streams of grace, and I will heal you and wash you from your defilement."

The waning piety of Catholics shall feel the power of this great devotion. It is a new impulse; it is a Divine movement; it is a gathering of the redeemed around their Incarnate Lord; it is the march of the true and just before the feet of Emmanuel.

Society arrayed against the Church may be overcome by love. Kings and people, look at the Man who was crucified for you, and whose blood alone can heal you. He will not strike nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in your streets. He will bear patiently all the injuries that you put upon Him. He desireth not your crowns, but asketh your souls. We have no forces to fight against the nations of earth. Against your artillery of death and your mighty armies we bring nothing but gentleness and patience. We will bear your persecutions, we will take the cross of the Lord, and go exiles from our native land. We will give you our property and our homes; yea, we will give you our lives, if you demand them; but we will die, praying to God that you may be converted to that faith that alone can make you wise to salvation, to that faith which is the only security of men or of states; and that

the love of the Man-God may yet overcome you. Nor is reason of any avail. We have reasoned long. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church have fought out every point in the line of dogmatic battle, and there is nothing more to be said. We cannot convince you. The plainest reason will not move you. You have ears, and you hear not; you have eyes, and see not. But perhaps the love of the Man-God may touch you. And, oh! that society might be converted to its Lord, whom it attacks, and cry out, like Saul, broken down and humiliated, "Lord, I did not know that it was Thou whom I went on my journey to persecute." And so love may win the kings and the peoples of earth to the Redeemer before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, when He "shall send Elias the prophet to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to their fathers, lest He come to smite the earth with a curse."

In the garden of God, the precious home of Emmanuel, the place where He dwelleth in all the richness of His grace, there the Sacred Heart shall do its work. It shall bring souls to the near embrace of their Maker, and shall come, as refining fire, to burn and purify. It shall come to try and test the sincerity of our professions, to discern between justice and injustice, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. They only who are arrayed before Emmanuel, whose hearts are united to His Sacred Heart; they only shall stand in the day when the Lord shall come to Zion, and judgment shall rest upon His vineyard. So from this devotion, revealed by God and desired by Him in these latter days as a preparation for His final coming, shall God bring forth from His Holy Church new life, and new zeal, and new Saints, to glorify His name who is

the King of Saints and the fountain of purity.

Then, dear Lord, what shall we render to Thee for this new and untold mercy, this new revelation of Thy grace? We have come with Thy people to consecrate our hearts to Thee. Deign from Thy heavenly throne to accept and seal our offering, and make it perpetual. "He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved." Amid the bright throng of Thy Saints, our hearts go up to their resting-place. Let their strong intercessions support us, as we draw near unto the consuming fire, and the unearthly music lifts us in trembling ecstasy. They have fought and conquered; they have passed the red sea of blood; they are where no shadow can dim the light of their victorious love. Lord, let us follow in their footsteps. And chiefly thou, O Mother and Queen, as gentle as thou art

pure, and as lovely as thou art glorious, guide mine heart to the throne of the Great King. Thy immaculate heart was ever the repose of Jesus in all His sorrows. It shall mould and fashion mine for the coming nuptials. Awake, then, O Queen! and do battle in these latter days with thy celestial armies. Arise, Mother most powerful, and, ere the Sun of grace shall set, conquer souls for thy Child and thy God.

APPENDIX.



# PASTORAL LETTER

OF

THE ARCHBISHOP AND BISHOPS OF THE PROVINCE OF NEW YORK TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THEIR CHARGE.

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VENERABLE BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY AND  
BELOVED CHILDREN OF THE LAITY:

Wishing to have part with our brethren of the episcopacy in the propagation of a pious and salutary work, and to make you sharers in the many spiritual privileges and blessings which it brings with it, we have resolved, with the Divine assistance, to dedicate our respective dioceses, together with all their churches, religious houses, charitable and educational institutions, collectively and singly, to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; and

we have appointed, accordingly, the approaching Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the great patronal festival of the Church in these United States, as the day on which this solemn act of consecration shall take place.

We feel sure that you will welcome this announcement with sincerest pleasure; for in the gloomy and perilous times upon which we have fallen, every new ray of light, every fresh gleam of hope, every additional source of strength and courage, are hailed with joy. This better light and hope, this additional strength and courage, will be given to you in the efficacious and beautiful devotion to the Sacred Heart, which it is the object of this act of consecration to promote.

There is a moral darkness, overspreading the earth. The light of Divine Faith, the only true light to guide our footsteps, has become obscured. In some

places it is burning dimly, in others it is wholly or well-nigh extinguished. Yet men are seen to "love the darkness rather than the light, for their ways are evil." They have risen in open revolt against God and against His Christ; against the supremacy of His dominion over the minds and consciences of individuals and of nations. The most essential truths of His revelation are rejected; the holiest mysteries of His religion are scoffed at and denied; the very life of Christianity is threatened. Irreligion, indifferentism, unbelief, with their attendant train of evils, abound on every side. As a consequence, or rather as a means to an end, the Church is persecuted. Her Supreme Pastor is held in bondage. Her bishops and priests, in certain portions of Europe, are forbidden the exercise of their rightful jurisdiction and authority over the members of their own

flock; some are proscribed and exiled; religious communities are despoiled of their property, driven from their homes, made subject to indignities and hardships the most cruel and unjust; even the faithful laity are not spared. Although we, in our free and favored country, are happily protected from extreme trials such as these, still, as children of the Church, we are members of one body in Christ; and when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Our sympathies, therefore, go out strongly and warmly to our struggling and afflicted brethren in other lands. Our prayers are for them as well as with them. All together we lift up our voices, saying, "How long, O Lord, how long?" "Thy arm alone is powerful to save." Still we fear not, we do not despond. We "know in whom we have trusted." We know His promises; we believe His word: "I

am with you all days." "Upon this rock I have built my church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it." Even now the voice of the same Divine Master, ever present in His Church, is speaking to holy souls within her bosom words of sweet comfort and encouragement; telling them whither they shall go for help and protection; how best, in the long-protracted struggle, they may obtain courage to endure and strength to overcome. If you hear not these words, you still may learn their import from the practical response that is given to them. Look around you, and what do you behold? Almost everywhere you see bishops and priests, religious men and women, holy servants of God, devout believers, both of high and low degree, coming together in pious confraternities, in associations of prayer, in pilgrimages, and all, as if moved by one common impulse, hastening to have re-

course for succor and protection to the compassionate Heart of Jesus. There they confidently hope to find a sure asylum, a safe refuge from every danger. There, also, is the never-failing fountain of infinite love and mercy—the overflowing source of every grace and blessing. Let us hasten, then, to this same Divine Heart, and we, too, “shall draw waters with joy from the fountains of the Saviour.”

This, dear brethren, is the motive which prompts us to ordain the solemn act of consecration in which you are invited to take part. In order that you may do this the more worthily, we exhort you to prepare yourselves beforehand by a good confession and by a devout reception of Holy Communion on the great festival day itself, if possible.

It is fitting, also, that you should join in this act as a public profession of your faith especially in all the great mysteries

of redemption, which have their most expressive symbol, as well as their living source and centre, in the adorable Heart of the God-Man, the "Word made flesh, and dwelling among us."

You will offer it, besides, as an act of reparation for the daily outrages and insults, the sacrileges and impieties, the indifference and unbelief, which so grievously afflict and wound this Divine Heart, so tender and compassionate, so patient, charitable, forgiving, notwithstanding the ingratitude and wickedness of men.

But, above all, you will seek to consecrate your own hearts to the Heart of your dear Saviour. You will take His for your model. You will study its lessons, and teach them to your children. "Suffer the little children to come to me, and forbid them not." See, then, that you bring them to the loving and tender Father, who wishes to press them to His heart and

have them walk the nearest to Him. But in what way can you bring them to Him and keep them by His side, where they will be secure from harm? You can only do so by giving or securing to them a sound Catholic education; by taking care that their faith and morals shall be guarded from the risks and perils to which they must be inevitably exposed wherever the first essential element of true education, that is to say, religion, is excluded or ignored. Remember that the interests of the soul are higher far than the interests of the body. "Seek *first* the kingdom of God and his justice, and all things else will be added unto you." Watch, then, and pray both for yourselves and for all those entrusted to you. Pray for our still suffering Pontiff, for the necessities of the Church, for the conversion of sinners; pray for your enemies, as well as for your friends. Commend all to the Sacred

Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, that so you may find help and protection during the days of life, pardon and mercy at the hour of death.

The Rev. Pastors are requested to read this Letter to their congregations on the two Sundays preceding the 8th of December. On that day the High Mass will be celebrated with all due solemnity. After Mass, the Sermon will be preached, and then the Act of Consecration, a printed formula of which is sent you, will be read aloud, the people meanwhile kneeling and accompanying with their hearts the words of the Priest. The ceremony will close with the "Te Deum." Where the urgency of time or place requires it, the Act of Consecration may take place at Vespers, with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Amen!

*Given at the Archiepiscopal Residence,  
New York, this 15th day of November, 1873.*

- ✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK.
- ✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF BROOKLYN.
- ✠ DAVID W., BISHOP OF PORTLAND.
- ✠ FRANCIS PATRICK, BISHOP OF HARTFORD.
- ✠ LOUIS, BISHOP OF BURLINGTON.
- ✠ STEPHEN VINCENT, BISHOP OF BUFFALO.
- ✠ JOHN J., BISHOP OF ALBANY.
- ✠ JOHN J., BISHOP OF BOSTON.
- ✠ BERNARD J., BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.
- ✠ PATRICK T., BISHOP OF SPRINGFIELD.
- ✠ FRANCIS, BP. OF RHESINA, COADJ. OF ALBANY.
- ✠ THOMAS F., BISHOP OF PROVIDENCE.
- ✠ EDGAR P., BISHOP OF OGDENSBURG.
- ✠ MICHAEL A., BISHOP OF NEWARK.

ACT OF CONSECRATION  
TO THE  
SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

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O most amiable and adorable Heart of Jesus! O Heart infinitely compassionate and merciful! our refuge in all dangers, our hope in all trials, our comfort and consolation in all sorrows! Behold us prostrate before Thee to implore Thy mercy, to claim Thy protection, and to offer ourselves entirely to Thee. Thou seest the dangers that surround us, the storms by which we are assailed, The powers of darkness have arisen against Thy Holy Church and against Thy unworthy but devoted servants. They have laid waste Thy inheritance, they have overturned Thy altars, they have persecuted those

who love and honor Thy Sacred Name. They glory in the evil which they have done, and vainly boast that they have triumphed over Thee and Thy Holy Church, and they have striven to destroy Thy worship from the face of the earth. But Thou art Almighty, and who shall resist Thee? Thou wilt arise in Thy power, and Thy enemies shall perish from before Thy face. Thou wilt command the winds and the waves, and there shall be a great calm.

Animated with this confidence in Thy power and in Thy love, O Divine Heart! we present our supplication on this day of our solemn consecration to Thee. Deign to receive our offering, unworthy as it is, and grant our prayer for the Church and for Thy devoted children who now solemnly dedicate themselves to Thy honor. O merciful Jesus! ever ready to admit us into the sacred and secure asylum of Thy

Sacred Heart, we, Thy unworthy but loving servants, wishing to give Thee a proof of our devotion, and to receive from Thee the assistance and protection which, in these calamitous times, we need for Thy Holy Church, for the Apostolic See, and for ourselves, do, on this day, publicly and solemnly consecrate ourselves entirely to Thee; our lives and our labors, our thoughts, words, actions, and sufferings. We pledge ourselves to Thee as Thy devoted servants for ever. We consecrate to Thee our Churches, our Missions, our Congregations, and all those for whose spiritual good we labor in Thy service; that Thy spirit may reign over them, Thy love sustain them, Thy grace sanctify them and make them at all times pleasing in Thy sight. O sweet and adorable Heart of Jesus! accept this holocaust which we offer; consume it with the flame of Thy Divine Love, that it may ascend

before Thee in the odor of sweetness, and that, united with Thy infinite merits, it may bring down upon us, upon Thy holy Church, upon our Holy Father the Pope, and upon all the members of our congregations, missions, schools, religious houses, and institutions of charity, the abundance of Thy blessings, the heavenly shower of Thy graces, the rich treasures which Thou hast promised to those who love and honor Thee. Defend us, O Lord, Thy servants, with the shield of Thy protection; guard us against the malice of the wicked, who hate Thy Church because it is Thine, and who persecute us because we love and adore Thy Sacred Heart, and defend the honor of Thy Most Holy Name. Let us find in Thee our refuge, our consolation, our hope. Be Thou, O Sacred Heart of Jesus! our support in life, our confidence in death, our perfect and eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

A BRIEF NOVENA  
TO THE  
SACRED HEART.

Translated from the French of L. J. Halles.

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FIRST DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as a place of retreat and a solitude full of sweetness.

“Come apart into a desert place, and rest a little,” St. Mark vi. 31.

“My heart is troubled within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me. Fear and trembling are come upon me, and darkness hath covered me. And I said, Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly away and be at rest,” Psalm liv. 5-7.

PRACTICE.—Peace, humility, and silence, in order to hear the voice of Jesus Christ.

## SECOND DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the nest of the dove, a place of rest and protection for the soul which desires to preserve herself without spot before the eyes of Jesus Christ.

“I will rejoice under the covert of Thy wings. My soul hath stuck close to Thee; Thy right hand hath received me,” Psalm lxii. 8, 9.

“Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,” St. Matthew v. 8.

PRACTICE.—Ask of the Heart of the Lamb without spot purity of mind and heart. In our fatigues, in our pains, in our temptations, let us seek the refuge of pure souls—the Heart of our Divine Saviour—in the Sacrament of purity and love.

## THIRD DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as a tower of defence, and as a buckler which protects us against the assaults of our enemies.

“I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength: The Lord is my firmament, my refuge, and my deliverer,” Psalm xvii. 1, 2.

“They that go far from Thee shall perish; Thou hast destroyed all them that are disloyal to Thee. But it is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord God,” Psalm lxxii. 27, 28.

PRACTICE.—Ask of our Lord the pardon of our faults, the grace to offend Him no more, grief, gratitude, and entire confidence in His power and mercy. The child who remains in the arms of an all-powerful Father cannot perish.

## FOURTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the fountain of living water, springing up into life eternal.

“You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour’s fountains,” Isaias xii. 3.

“As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God,” Psalm xli. 1, 2.

“With Thee, O Lord, is the fountain of life,” Psalm xxxv. 10.

PRACTICE.—Ask of our Lord the gift of humble, filial prayer, full of courage and confidence. Say to Him often, with the Samaritan woman and with St. Teresa, “Lord, give me of this water, that it may purify and enrich my soul.”

## FIFTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the throne of mercy, or as an ocean of goodness, as a fathomless sea without a shore, by which we are surrounded on every side. Faith tells us that God is infinite and immense. The apostle who reposed upon the breast of Jesus Christ tells us that "God is Love."

"The Lord is sweet to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works,"  
Psalm cxliv. 9.

"Lord, I abandon all the past to your mercy; I commit the future to your providence, the present and all that I am to your goodness, to your love alone. Receive me, guide me, and save me."

PRACTICE.—An entire confidence in the infinite goodness of our Lord, and an abandonment to the guidance of His holy

providence. Ask Him that all the designs of His Heart may be accomplished in us without reserve to the end of our days.

Be assured that heaven and earth shall pass away before He will fail to protect you while you are His obedient child, or, at least, are sincerely desirous to obey Him.

God is my Father ; He knows all things ;  
He can do all things ; He loves me.

## SIXTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the Balm of Salvation, shed to heal all our wounds.

The Heart of Jesus, pierced by the lance, poured out even to its last drops the blood which saved us. "He hath loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in His own blood," Apoc. i. 5.

"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests," Apoc. v. 9, 10.

PRACTICE.—Ask of God, by the tears and the blood which He hath shed for us, the grace to know and tenderly love His Person and His Adorable Heart. Let us resolve lovingly to study in our prayer His life, His words, and the virtues of His most Holy Soul.

## SEVENTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as a paradise of delight, a place of peace and shelter, where we find protection against the heat of the day and the fire of our passions.

“My people shall sit in the beauty of peace and in the tabernacles of confidence; in a repose full of abundance,”  
Is. xxxii. 18.

“My soul trusteth in Thee, O God, and under the shadow of Thy wings will I hope till iniquity shall pass away,”  
Psalm lvi. 1, 2.

PRACTICE.—Let us retire often during the day to the feet of our Divine Shepherd, and there abandon ourselves to Him with humility and confidence, and with the fulness of our hearts.

## EIGHTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the school of the Divine Master, of Him who came to teach us celestial wisdom, and who has said to us, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls."

"I bless Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones."

"God walks with the humble; He reveals Himself to the simple; He gives intelligence to the little ones, and opens to pure souls all the treasures of His wisdom."—Im. of Christ.

PRACTICE.—Ask of our Lord His spirit and His light, with the virtues which He hath particularly taught us, and which are dearest to His Heart—humility, sweetness, and charity.

## NINTH DAY.

The Heart of Jesus considered as the port of Salvation, or a Divine asylum where we may retire from the storms of this life, and where one day we shall repose in eternal peace.

“Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts shall never be at rest until they repose in Thee.”—St. Aug.

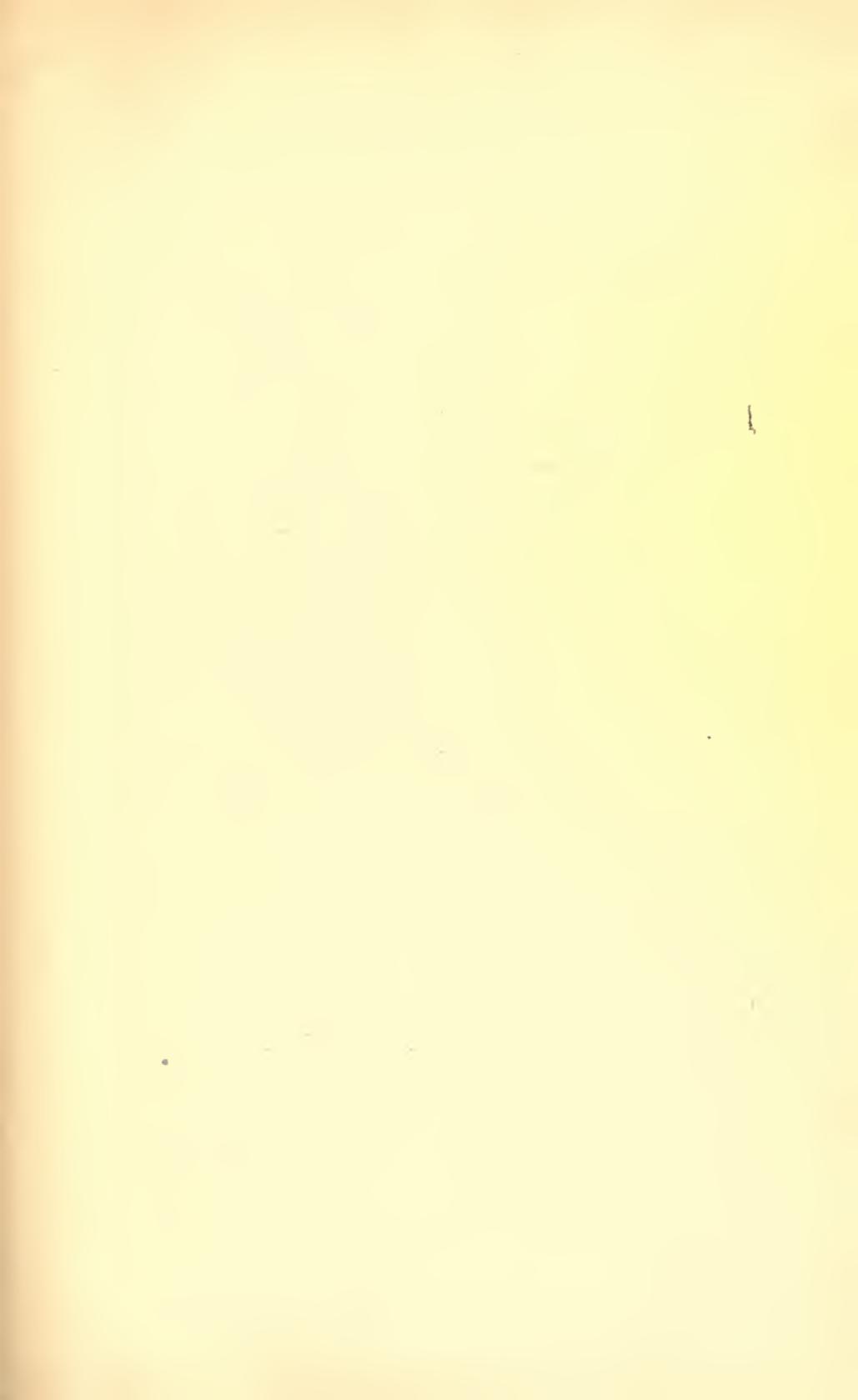
“Lord Jesus, I commit to your hands my soul, my heart, and my life.” This prayer, taken from the last words of our Lord upon the Cross, is the sweetest and most holy of all ejaculatory prayers. It contains the disposition of heart for all the virtues we should exercise during life, and the best preparation for death.

PRACTICE.—Ask earnestly, and every day, of the Lord the gift of perseverance; that, having fulfilled all the particular designs

of the Heart of Jesus in our lives, we may one day expire in the peace and love of that generous Heart.

“In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be confounded,” Psalm xxx. 1, 2.















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